

## **Procedural Register in the Olivet Discourse: A Functional Linguistic Approach to Mark 13**

I will rely on insights from Halliday's register theory to explain the Markan Jesus' use of a functional variety of language I call procedural register. The identification of procedural register in the main section of the Olivet Discourse (vv. 5b-23) will be shown to reveal the rhetorical design of the discourse within a first temporal horizon, of direct relevance for the audience and addressing the disciples' question (v. 4). The absence of procedural register in vv. 24-27 indicates the opening of a second horizon in the speech, lacking immediate impact for the audience and no longer addressing the disciples' question.

### **I. Mark 13: Mark's Agenda and Ours**

For the last few decades, the attention of Markan scholarship has been shifting consistently towards an appreciation of Mark's gospel as a finished literary product. Be they socio-rhetorical, oral performance or reader response oriented, literary approaches predominate among current works in the gospel of Mark, all having in common an internal approach to the meaning of the text, rather than an external one. In the words of Elizabeth S. Malbon, the new focus is on how the text means what it does<sup>(1)</sup>.

This functional approach to texts is at the heart of my own functional-grammatical based work in Acts<sup>(2)</sup>. In this study I will rely on the Hallidayan concept of register, a functional variety of language, to present and explain the linguistic choices made by Mark in his composition or editing of his text. That is, the Hallidayan notion of register will help us to understand and explain how Greek clauses, pericopes or major sections of Mark's Olivet Discourse mean what they do. This is an objective shared by rhetorically oriented critics who have produced analyses and interpretations of Mark 13 in recent years.

<sup>(1)</sup> E. STRUTHERS MALBON, "Narrative Criticism: How does the Story Mean?", *Mark and Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (eds. J.C. ANDERSON – S.D. MOORE) (Minneapolis, MN 1992) 24.

<sup>(2)</sup> See G. MARTIN-ASENSIO, *Transitivity-Based Foregrounding in the Acts of the Apostles. A Functional-Grammatical Approach to the Lukan Perspective* (JSNTSup 202; SNTG 8; Sheffield 2000).

Unfortunately the analyses of Black<sup>(3)</sup>, Yarbrow Collins<sup>(4)</sup>, and Robbins<sup>(5)</sup>, among others, fail to engage consistently and in detail with the language of the Olivet Discourse, and focus instead on possible *Sitz im Leben*, or possible matches between the speech and the instruction found in Graeco-Roman rhetorical manuals.

Mark 13 has often been seen as an ideal section of Mark's gospel for gleanings into the situation of Mark's community that called forth the evangelist's writing. The abundance of imperatives, temporal indicators, reference to the "desolating sacrilege," and the study of the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke have led scholars to discern in Mark's composition various possible concerns, needs, or errors of his community in the years 40 to 75 C.E.<sup>(6)</sup> Although proposals as to Mark's purpose in writing abound, Beasley Murray's survey reveals the extent to which theological and philosophical bias has gotten in the way of pursuing the task of investigating Mark's agenda, as discernible in his composing, or shaping and editing of the Olivet Discourse<sup>(7)</sup>.

<sup>(3)</sup> C.C. BLACK, "An Oration at Olivet: Some Rhetorical Dimensions of Mark 13", *Persuasive Artistry*. Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy (ed. D.F. WATSON) (JSNTSup 50; Sheffield 1991) 66-92.

<sup>(4)</sup> A. YARBROW COLLINS, "The Apocalyptic Rhetoric of Mark 13 in Historical Context", *BR* 41 (1996) 5-36.

<sup>(5)</sup> V.K. ROBBINS, "Rhetorical Ritual: Apocalyptic Discourse in Mark 13", *Vision and Persuasion*. Rhetoric Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse (eds. G. CAREY – L.G. BLOOMQUIST) (St. Louis, MO 1999) 95-121.

<sup>(6)</sup> E.g. R. PESCH, *Naherwartungen*. Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13 (Düsseldorf 1968) 231: "Der Evangelist spricht ein klärendes Wort in die aufgeregte Situation der Gemeinde ...", namely, to cool off eschatological excitement. Similarly to Pesch, M.D. HOOKER, *The Gospel According to Mark* (London 1993) 300, states that Mark wrote in order "to urge inaction, rather than action". Thus also E. TROCMÉ, *L'Évangile de Marc* (Geneve 2000) 323, and many others. T.J. WEEDEN, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel", *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W. TELFORD) (Philadelphia, PA 1985) 89-101, argued that Mark was written to correct a heretical "theios aner" Christology. Most recently regarding Mark 13 and the "Markan community" see: J. MARCUS, *Mark 1-8*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (Anchor Yale Bible; New Haven, CT 2000) 25, 30. Yarbrow Collins, voicing a widely held view regarding the "rhetorical exigence" that called forth the speech, namely, the appearance of false teachers and false messiahs during the first Jewish war with Rome. See A. YARBROW COLLINS, *Mark*. A Commentary (Minneapolis, MN 2007) 603 — a view already expressed in YARBROW COLLINS, "Apocalyptic Rhetoric", 5. But see B. WITHERINGTON, *The Gospel of Mark*. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI 2001) 28-29.

<sup>(7)</sup> G.R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Jesus and the Last Days*. The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse (Vancouver 2005).

Specifically, modern concerns for obtaining a clear chronology of events, critical scholarship's evolving assumptions as to what Jesus could or could not have said, and, especially attempts to highlight or deny the Markan Jesus' "mistake" in allegedly predicting the Son of Man's coming within a generation of the speech, have severely muddled the waters of exegesis and reduced visibility of Mark's careful shaping of this episode to a minimum.

Scholars have traditionally seen the Olivet Discourse as fundamentally different from the rest of Mark's gospel. Pesh was most emphatic in this regard: "Kapitel 13 passt nicht in den kunstvollen Aufbau des Markusevangeliums! Das Kapitel fungiert als ein selbständiger Teil ..." <sup>(8)</sup>. How exactly Mark 13 is different remains a debated issue until today. Analyses of language and style, the state of play of which has been recently summarized by Dyer <sup>(9)</sup> have helped to identify and quantify lexical and syntactical items that are considered frequent, rare, or unique in Mark 13. Yet, even in a recent study like Dyer's the aim seems to be determining traditions behind Mark's composition, and these conclusions tend to get in the way of appreciating Mark's carefully crafted structure. Matters of genre have also been the subject of intense debate, and this has a direct bearing on the determination of a context of situation that mark would have intended to address with his gospel. Is the discourse an example of paraenesis <sup>(10)</sup>? Paraclesis <sup>(11)</sup>? Paraenetic eschatology <sup>(12)</sup>? Apologetic-paraenetic-chatechetical material <sup>(13)</sup>? A Farewell discourse <sup>(14)</sup>? Prophetic oracle <sup>(15)</sup>? Or perhaps a speech conforming to epideictic rhetoric <sup>(16)</sup>? The number of different proposals suggests the genre does

<sup>(8)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 65.

<sup>(9)</sup> K.D. DYER, *The Prophecy on the Mount* (ITSCBS2; Bern 1998).

<sup>(10)</sup> V. BALABANSKI, *Eschatology in the Making*. Matthew, Mark and the Didache (SNTS 97; Cambridge 1997) 100, argues that the speech is about paraenesis, rather than about objective signs. For VORSTER ("Literary Reflections", *The Interpretation*, 281) the speech is written in paraenetic style. WITHERINGTON (*The Gospel*, 445) speaks of a "paraenetic thrust". W. L. LANE, *The Gospel According to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1974) 336, suggests a "paraenetic framework".

<sup>(11)</sup> LANE, *The Gospel*, 446.

<sup>(12)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 355.

<sup>(13)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 231.

<sup>(14)</sup> YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 594; YARBRO COLLINS, "Apocalyptic Rhetoric",

9. Against this view see WITHERINGTON, *The Gospel*, 342.

<sup>(15)</sup> YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 594.

<sup>(16)</sup> BLACK, "An Oration", 66-92.

not exactly match any of the usual categories, and a fresh look at the language, structure and possible functions of the speech may be required.

Linguistically oriented monographs and articles have not, thus far, contributed any significant new insights into how the linguistic choices Mark has made in his composition can be seen to be addressing concrete rhetorical (i.e. addressable by means of language) needs of his community. In his two essays on Mark mentioned above, Longacre suggests a narrative template that is applicable to Mark's gospel as a whole, as well as certain criteria for determining the peaks, or grounding scheme of the narrative. Unfortunately, Longacre excluded Mark 13 from the scope of his analysis. Paul Danove's most valuable contribution to a linguistic analysis of Mark 13 is found, I would argue, in a 2003 article and in a chapter of his 2001 monograph<sup>(17)</sup>. In his *Biblica* article, Danove contributes a fundamental insight to the ongoing discussion of the role of the Son of Man in Mark's narrative and shows how Mark deploys a rhetoric of repetition to progressively reaffirm ("sophisticating rhetorical strategy") or contradict ("deconstructive rhetorical strategy") existing beliefs. Danove concludes that, contrary to previous beliefs of his readers, Mark's narrative rhetoric foregrounds the Son of Man's progressive characterization as suffering, dying, rising and coming again.

Though, as Porter himself admits, his essay is merely programmatic and suggestive, Stanley Porter's application of register to Mark's gospel<sup>(18)</sup> points the way forward with some useful examples of how Hallidayan register theory may shed light on some much debated issues in Markan studies, including Mark's rhetorical agenda. For Porter, the concept of register represents a valid, complementary ally to traditional criticism in the quest for the recovery of the context of situation that called forth the text. However, it seems to me more concrete results will be obtained from the analysis of a specific section of the gospel such as the Olivet Discourse episode, since it seems clear

(17) P.L. DANOVE, "The Rhetoric of the Characterization of Jesus as the Son of Man and Christ in Mark", *Bib* 84 (2003) 16-34, esp. 23-25 on the Son of Man; ID., "Contribution of the Method to Narrative Analysis", *Linguistics and Exegesis*, 120-139. An earlier version of this chapter appeared as "The Narrative Function of Mark's Characterization of God", *NT* 43 (2001) 12-31.

(18) S.E. PORTER, "Register in the Greek of the New Testament: Application with Reference to Mark's Gospel", *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts. Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation* (ed. M.D. CARROLL, R.) (JSOTSS 299; Sheffield 2000) 209-229.



that Mark uses more than one register, and individual sections could have been shaped by the writer to address separate rhetorical needs. Mark 13 is widely recognized to be such a section.

The view that Mark is in his Olivet Discourse attempting to cool off eschatological passions has strong backing from the most influential works. Contrary to this well established view, I will show that the primary thrust of the speech is to focus his audience's attention on the road signs leading up to the "abomination of desolation" and accompanying events as described in vv. 14-23. Verses 5b-23 include the peak of the speech and the answer to the disciples' question, delivered in a crescendo fashion in an unusual register with both procedural and paraenetic features. The section beginning with verse 24 represents the opening of a new temporal horizon in the speech by means of a clear register shift, and no longer addresses the question of the disciples regarding the temple's destruction, nor any action required of them. In fact, it doesn't even address the disciples directly. I will show that the procedural register evident in Mark 13,5b-23 communicates urgency, with increasing rhetorical effect culminating in vv. 14-23. In light of the fact that this register is absent from Matthew's parallel passage, Matthew 24, Mark's composition may reveal something about the situation and contribute to the determination of the date of the gospel. I will show that changes in register are the clearest revealers of Mark's agenda in the Olivet Discourse.

## II. The Olivet Discourse Episode. Cohesion, Structure and Register Variation

The narrative introduction and speech are clearly a cohesive literary unit<sup>(19)</sup>, both internally, and in relation to the rest of Mark's gospel. The relationship of the introductory verses (1-5a) providing the setting, as well as the prophecy of Jesus and, especially, the question of the disciples to the speech itself (5b-37), has been a subject of intense

<sup>(19)</sup> From the classics, the most detailed treatment of the structure and cohesion is probably J. LAMBRECHT, *Die Redaktion der Markus Apokalypse* (AnBib 28; Rome 1967) 267-300. See also T. J. GEDDERT, *Watchwords. Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology* (JSNTSup 26; Sheffield 1989), and S. VILLOTA HERRERO, *Palabras sin caso. Función interpretativa de Mc13.28-37 en el discurso escatológico de Marcos* (Instituto Bfblico y Oriental; Estella 2006). Villota Herrero has written lengthy chapters on the thematic connections between vv. 28-37 and the rest of the speech and gospel. Most recently see YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 594.

debate. To what extent is the speech an answer to the disciples' question? Has the Markan Jesus addressed the two-part question directly and are there clear indicators of this in the language and structure of the speech? Conversely, is the speech a partial answer in which the Markan Jesus addresses the question, as well as adding information not requested by the disciples? A majority of scholars have sided with the latter view. Thus Beasley-Murray believes there is much in the speech that appears unrelated to the prophecy and question<sup>(20)</sup>. Trocmé argues that, in the speech, the Markan Jesus addresses not the temple and the timing of its destruction, but the parousia<sup>(21)</sup>. Hooker sees much of the speech being directed not to the disciples, but to the readers of the gospel<sup>(22)</sup>. The determination of the referent of ταῦτα ... πάντα in the disciples' question (v. 4) and throughout the speech (v. 23; 29, 30) is rightly considered crucial for connecting the speech to the question, as we will see below. Unfortunately widespread confusion about the referent of τέλος in the speech has clouded scholarly vision and led to the blurring of compositional boundaries fixed by Mark<sup>(23)</sup>. In the below section-by-section analysis we will show that τέλος is not likely to refer to anything after v. 23 in the speech, a fact not precluding the opening of a new narrative horizon at verse 24, which Mark does without recourse to the word "end".

In their approach to the structure of the speech itself, literary and rhetorical critics have expressed a commitment to let a thorough analysis of the text itself reveal Mark's structure, ahead of other methodological considerations. This is a positive change from the source and form critical approaches that have been bound up with the study of the structure of the speech since the publication and widespread acceptance of Colani's Little Apocalypse thesis<sup>(24)</sup>. Thus Hooker<sup>(25)</sup>,

<sup>(20)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 356.

<sup>(21)</sup> TROCMÉ, *L'Évangile*, 323-324.

<sup>(22)</sup> HOOKER, *The Gospel*, 298-300.

<sup>(23)</sup> The referent of τέλος is identified by a majority of scholars as the "parousia", or the "end of the world", even if these terms are foreign to Mark. Thus PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 121; HOOKER, *Mark*, 299-300; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 374; TROCMÉ, *L'Évangile*, 322; VILLOTA HERRERO, *Palabras*, 185; ROBBINS, "Rhetorical Ritual", 103; BALABANSKI, *Eschatology*, 74; GEDDERT, *Watchwords*, 226; LANE, *The Gospel*, 448.

<sup>(24)</sup> See the discussion in BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 32-79.

<sup>(25)</sup> HOOKER, *The Gospel*, 298. For Hooker, the speech shows "clear signs of having been pieced together" (297).

Trocmé<sup>(26)</sup>, Pesch<sup>(27)</sup> and others have speculated about the degree to which the Little Apocalypse or *Flugblatt* sources remain discernible throughout the major sections of our text. Those speculations aside, a consensus is evident among some of the most influential works concerning at least the most basic structure of the speech as we have it, namely, verses 5b-23; 24-27; 28-37<sup>(28)</sup>. The clear and emphatic colophon at v. 23 (ὁμοῖς δὲ βλέπετε προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα), the sharply different style of the material in vv. 24-27, and the sapiential style of the final section containing a parable and a simile, have not been missed by most scholars. Other structural elements that have often been discussed are the two references to false prophets / false christs that form an inclusio at the beginning and end of the first section (5b-23), the high number of imperatives, the temporal references etc.

Several proposals regarding “structural keys” to the entire speech have been made. Of these, the following are worth noting here. Balabanski has seen the unusually high number of imperatives in the speech, βλέπετε in particular, as the structural key<sup>(29)</sup>. Thus also Lane<sup>(30)</sup>. Pesch has noticed that the ὅταν clauses in vv. 7 and 14 “..markieren deutliche Einsätze innerhalb des Aufbaus der Rede”<sup>(31)</sup>. Mateos sees that these clauses appear in both the question as well as distributed throughout the speech, and are therefore, “marcas estructurantes primarias”<sup>(32)</sup>. My own proposal for the structure will explain how both these elements, together with choices from the transitivity network of Greek, are combined by Mark in an unusual register, a functional variety of language, not used by him anywhere

<sup>(26)</sup> TROCMÉ (*L'Évangile*, 322-223) sees the “petite apocalypse chrétienne” in vv. 7-8.14-20. 24-27.

<sup>(27)</sup> For PESCH (*Naherwartungen*, 65) the structure of the speech is based on the apocalyptic *Vorlage* plus paraenetic material.

<sup>(28)</sup> Thus V. TAYLOR, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (London 1952) 499-500, though seeing some sub-divisions; PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 65; HOOKER, *Mark*, 300-301 — with some sub-divisions; LAMBRECHT, *Die Redaktion*, 286; BEASLEY MURRAY, *Last Days*, 365. More recently, though with subdivisions in the first section indicating “stages” (YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 613). YARBRO COLLINS (*Mark*, 614-615) speaks of the first section as indicating stages of “the end time”, being the third stage. VILLOTA HERRERO, *Palabras*, 25-31.

<sup>(29)</sup> BALABANSKI, *Eschatology*, 72-74.

<sup>(30)</sup> “The discourse is actually structured and sustained by the nineteen imperatives...”, LANE, *The Gospel*, 446.

<sup>(31)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 78.

<sup>(32)</sup> J. MATEOS, *Marcos 13. El grupo cristiano en la historia* (Lectura del Nuevo Testamento 5; Madrid 1987) 146.

else in his gospel. This unusual register, a combination of paraenesis and procedural styles, is used by the Markan Jesus to discuss road signs in the near future of his audience, together with the required interpretation and reaction to these road signs. I will show how this register is evident in the language of vv. 5b-23, which includes the discourse peak and specific answer to the disciples' question, and in the parable of vv. 28-29, but completely absent from vv 24-27. The final section of the speech and the episode as a whole, vv. 28-37 will be shown to be an interpretive key summarizing and distinguishing two distinct temporal horizons and associated required behaviors. We shall then be in a position to appreciate how this speech is "the most coherent of all those attributed to Jesus in Mark" <sup>(33)</sup>. Once the structure and rhetorical arrangement of Mark's Olivet Discourse are set forth, I will briefly compare them with the parallel passage in Matthew 24 and suggest some conclusions regarding context of situation and dating.

### 1. *Narrative Setting: vv. 1-5a*

The presence of verbs of movement and the change of localization of v. 1 is characteristic of Markan structuring and indicates the beginning of a new section. The new section starting in 14,1 is signaled by a temporal shift and the re-introduction of characters not mentioned in chapter 13. As I will show below, the speech includes two emphatic colophons, one of which is placed at the very end (v. 37) and clearly marks the end of the discourse.

The portrayal of the disciples in Mark is another of the perceived keys to Mark's overall rhetorical structure in his gospel. This portrayal of the twelve becomes progressively more negative as the narrative advances <sup>(34)</sup>. But, what about Mark 13? Mateos has noted that in the narrative setting section (vv. 1-5a), Jesus is alone described as exiting the temple (v. 1: Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἰς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) which is, in his view, an intentional Markan construction showing that while Jesus has left the Jewish institution,

<sup>(33)</sup> YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 594.

<sup>(34)</sup> T.J. WEEDEN, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel", *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W.R. TELFORD) (Philadelphia, PA 1985) 90-91, argues for a progression of the negative portrayal of the disciples. See also in the same volume R.C. TANNEHILL, "The Disciples in Mark", 169-195; D. RHOADS – J. DEWEY – D. MICHIE (eds.), *Mark as Story* (Minneapolis, MN 1999) 90-94; 122-129. See also J. MATEOS, *Los "Doce" y Otros Seguidores de Jesús en el Evangelio de Marcos* (Madrid 1982).

his disciples remain committed to it<sup>(35)</sup>. Similarly, only Jesus is portrayed as sitting “opposite” the temple (v. 3) as he begins his speech to answer the question of the disciples, a detail to which much importance is attached by Mateos and many others<sup>(36)</sup>. Those two clauses are all that can potentially be interpreted as contributing to Mark’s negative portrayal of the disciples in this episode formed by the narrative setting and the speech. Geddert has argued that signs (σημεῖα) are consistently disapproved of in Mark’s gospel, and, therefore the speech of Jesus does not include any signs, the question asked of him notwithstanding. As we will show below, Jesus does provide the disciples a set of road signs, in a crescendo of relevance and importance leading up to v. 14, and no negative judgment is passed, therefore, on the disciples’ request. It is not signs from heaven or supernatural portents that both question and answer refer to, but concrete road signs that may help the disciples interpret and properly react to the events that are to befall them in the near future. Thus, two senses of the word σημεῖα are evident in this episode, only one being inappropriate and characteristic of false prophets and false Christs (v. 22, cf. 8,12, no σημεῖον shall be given to this generation ). France is, therefore, correct, the disciples are asking when the temple will be destroyed, and what σημεῖον will help them to prepare for that formidable event<sup>(37)</sup>. To this question Jesus provides a rather detailed answer (5b-23), but also gives additional predictions which extend beyond the scope of the question, delivered in a completely different style (24-27), and wraps up the speech with an interpretive key to the entire discourse (28-27).

Following Jesus’ prediction of the destruction of the temple, the disciples ask the master a two-fold question: When will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished? Does the question point to one or two separate events as

<sup>(35)</sup> MATEOS, *Marcos 13*, 86-87.

<sup>(36)</sup> MATEOS, *Marcos 13*, 87. Scholars with an interest in Graeco-Roman rhetoric have attached special significance to Jesus’ positioning “against” the temple. Thus ROBBINS, “Rhetorical Ritual”, 5; YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 602. But compare the καθήμενου ... κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ clause of v. 3 with 12,41: καθίσας κατέναντι τοῦ γαζοφυλάκιου, where Jesus sits opposite the offering box in order to evaluate positively the type of giving into the offering box that is praise worthy.

<sup>(37)</sup> R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 2002) 506. He argues that the question and the speech deal only with the destruction of the temple, until v. 32 which refers to the second coming of Jesus.

its referent(s)? Scholars who argue for the latter view usually take the second clause (τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι τάντα) to be eschatologically loaded, specifically by the verb and / or by the plural “all (these) things”<sup>(38)</sup>. But, no such inference is justifiable from the immediate context, or from the meaning of the verb συντελεῖσθαι, of which this is the only instance in Mark. Much more likely is the explanation that the ταῦτα ... πάντα merely indicates that the disciples perceive the destruction of the temple to be a complex event or a process leading up to a climax<sup>(39)</sup>. This interpretation is certainly confirmed by the answer of Jesus in vv. 5b-23, which, as I will show, contains the peak of the speech and a direct answer to the question of the disciples.

As we will see below, clear connections exist between the speech and the question asked by the disciples. Vv. 23 and 29-30 include respectively πάντα, ταῦτα and ταῦτα πάντα, all pointing back anaphorically to the question, and contributing to the cohesiveness of the entire episode. More significantly, cohesiveness is achieved by the temporal ὅταν clauses of vv. 7, 11, 14, and 28-29, which also point back to the question (4b) and give the first and main section a sense of urgency and of moving forward progressively towards the climactic point of v. 14: Ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ ... τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη the only combination of “when...then” in the speech, and the second of only two in the entire gospel (the other instance being 2,20). These ὅταν

<sup>(38)</sup> TAYLOR (*The Gospel*, 502) suggested the natural sense, but then strays from it: “ταῦτα points back to the prophecy of the destruction of the temple, and, taken by itself, ταῦτα τάντα has the same meaning. But as the chapter now stands, ταῦτα τάντα appears to point forward, and it is in this sense that it is commonly interpreted”. See also HOOKER, *The Gospel*, 305; VILLOTA HERRERO, *Palabras*, 159; YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 602. But see J.R. DONAHUE – D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina 2; Collegeville, MN 2002) 368, who argue that “these things” and “all these things” most likely refer to the same event, namely, the destruction of the Jerusalem temple.

<sup>(39)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 386; MATEOS, *Marcos*, 126; YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 602. The latter two scholars argue that Mark has carefully edited the question so as to make it connect the prediction of Jesus with the speech. Lambrecht sees in the ταῦτα (4a) ταῦτα νάντα (4b) a formal parallelism, the “all the things” expanding the thought of the earlier “these things”, but having the same referent. However, LAMBRECHT (*Die Redaktion*, 85-87) argues with the majority of scholars that συντελεῖσθαι is a “terminus technicus” referring to the “Endzeit”. FRANCE (*The Gospel*, 505) makes the strongest statement in regard to the referent of ταῦτα πάντα, calling the positing of a second subject “an exegetical tour de force”.

clauses, characteristic of the first section, are absent from the second (vv. 24-27) and are picked up again in the final one, the interpretive key to the speech, which contrasts by means of parable and simile, that which is known and understood by means of road signs (first horizon, vv. 5b-23) from that which is unpredictable and indeterminate, and requires a state of constant vigilance (second horizon, vv. 24-27).

## 2. *Road Signs and Tribulation: vv. 5b-23*

The speech itself begins with a typical Markan construction: "And Jesus began to say to them" (<sup>40</sup>). It seems self evident that, throughout the section, Jesus is addressing his disciples, at least the four explicitly mentioned in the narrative setting section: Peter and James and John and Andrew (v. 4). However, Jesus is addressing his audience simply by means of verb forms and pronouns in the second person plural, beginning and ending the section with the imperative βλέπετε, watch out! Three major sub-sections are discernible (vv. 5b-8; 9-13; 14-23) each having as its thematic core a command to watch, a ὅταν clause (when...) and a number of imperatives by which Jesus prescribes concrete behavior expected of the disciples at specific times.

Thus, the three subsections represent a triad, with each of its members incorporating a command to watch out, a ὅταν clause indicating a future event(s) in need of interpretation, and one or more imperatives by which Jesus prescribes the behavior he expects from the disciples in response to the event(s) described. As mentioned above, the abundance of imperatives has led many scholars to define the genre of the section, or even the entire speech as paraenetic. However, the summary above suggests this material is more than mere paraenesis. As mentioned, we have here a combination of the ὅταν clauses, depicting concrete situations or events the disciples will be faced with, and the associated imperatives, which builds up in relevance, immediacy and intensity from the "look out" of v. 5, to the "watch out for yourselves" of v. 9 to the "when...then" statement of verse 14, in a subsection ending with the emphatic: "I have told you all things." The crescendo of this section was not missed by Lambrecht, who argues correctly that the presence of τότε in v. 14 "increases the voltage" (<sup>41</sup>). In fact, the emphatic "when...then" of v. 14 answers directly and unmistakably the disciples' question, providing the final and clearest

(<sup>40</sup>) See TAYLOR, *The Gospel*, 63; PRYKE, *Redactional Style*, 79.

(<sup>41</sup>) LAMBRECHT, *Die Redaktion*, 148.

σημεῖον, the final road sign indicating that “all these things” are to be fulfilled. Thus the first ὅταν clause makes reference to “wars and rumors of wars,” which will be heard by the disciples. In reaction to these, they should not be alarmed, for though these things “must happen,” the end is not yet (οὐπω τὸ τέλος). The second sub-section increases the immediacy and the urgency by means of the explicit subject plus reflexive pronoun in βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοὺς. The second ὅταν clause makes clear that the disciples themselves will become victims in the dreadful times ahead: When they bring you handing you over... don’t worry about what you will say. Finally, in v. 14 the ὅταν clause becomes fully specific and detailed: When you see the desolating sacrilege... then, let those in Judea flee to the mountains, etc. The following verses describe the tribulation that will befall the disciples in the near future, with specific instructions to flee and save their lives. The tribulation notwithstanding, God has shortened those days on behalf of His elect. In the second member of an inclusio, the Markan Jesus refers again to the deceivers, false prophets and false christs who will rise in order to deceive, if possible, even God’s elect. The final clause of this sub-section delivers a clear sense of finality and completeness, and refers anaphorically to the question of v. 4: ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.

The language of this section is a rare mix of procedural and paraenetic registers, which associates behavior with specific time frames by means of “when X do Y” patterns, and has the highest concentration of ὅταν clauses in the entire gospel. In Mark, ὅταν clauses can carry a gnomic sense, as in the parables in chapter 4, which contain the second highest concentration of ὅταν clauses in all of Mark, and refer to situations or processes that are assumed to be always or generally occurring. As Pesch points out, another set of ὅταν clauses seems to have an eschatological sense (8,38; 9,9; 12,23 etc)<sup>(42)</sup>, as they refer to the time of Jesus’ coming, resurrection, or the resurrection of the dead. In chapter 13, however, the usage is clearly different, as here the “when” clauses are an integral part of a speech about future events, of which its main section, 5b-23, is a set of instructions associated to time frames progressing towards a climax. The closest examples of this usage of ὅταν in conjunction with imperatives is found in some of Paul’s letters, as he delivers final and highly practical instructions to be carried out when he next visits churches, when his letter is read, when

<sup>(42)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 119.



he sends Artemas, etc (Col 4,16; Titus 3,12 etc). The question of the disciples is concrete, specific, and related exclusively to Jesus' prediction of the doom of the Jerusalem temple. The first part of the speech (5b-23) addresses the question directly and specifically and does provide a set of potential or actual road signs culminating with the sign par excellence, set up where he ought not to be<sup>(43)</sup>. When the disciples see the desolating sacrilege, those who are in Judea should flee without delay as the tribulation that will ensue is without parallel in history. The warning against false prophets and christs closes the inclusio that was opened at v. 6, and the section ends with the powerful colophon, in which πάντες points back anaphorically to the second part of the disciples' question (v. 4b): But you watch out! I have told you all things.

Contrary to Pesch, I wish to argue that Mark is not in this section writing anti-apocalyptic material, and inserting "when" clauses to correct eschatological expectations. Pesch is also incorrect in arguing that no real signs are given but merely the suggestion of "the end" being "nahe"<sup>(44)</sup>. Neither apocalyptic nor anti-apocalyptic, this material is practical, of direct and immediate relevance to the audience, yet conveying urgency in a crescendo which cannot be missed by readers and hearers, and which culminates in v. 14. As I mentioned above, the identification of the referent of τέλος (vv. 8, 13) is a crucial issue, without which this section, as well as the speech as a whole, cannot be properly understood. The two instances of the word are part of the first and second subsections I have outlined above which exhibit the "when X do Y" pattern and build up in intensity climaxing in the third subsection. In the first instance, Jesus tells the disciples that wars and rumors of wars must come, but this is not the end. In the second instance, after describing in some detail the suffering that will befall the disciples, Jesus concludes: But he who endures to the end will be saved (v.23). This is followed immediately after by the final subsection

<sup>(43)</sup> The determination of a historical referent is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the strong connections that tie the question and speech together, the emphatic colophon of v 23 which refers back to v. 4b, and the mention of Judea lend strong support to those that see vv. 14-23 as describing the events of 70 AD in Jerusalem including the razing of the temple. This view is further supported by a comparison of the parallel material in Matthew 24, for whom these events appear to be in the past. Matthew has left out the crescendo-creating ὅταν clauses with imperatives, except for that of v. 14. In Matthew's version of the Olivet Discourse the focus has become the parousia.

<sup>(44)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 119.

which starts powerfully in v. 14 with the most emphatic *ὅταν* plus imperatives set, expressed in the “when x then y” construction, appearing only twice in the entire gospel. There are no more references to *τέλος* in Mark 13, or in the remainder of the gospel<sup>(45)</sup>. In light of this, and the complete change in register and subject matter that begins in v. 24, it seems clear that “the end” cannot refer to anything after v. 23. Indeed, the two instances of *τέλος* are pointing forward to the answer to the disciples’ question (*τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι*), an answer that is finally complete with v. 14-16. Pesch and Geddert have both failed to see that, as is to be expected from the question asked, this section is the discussion of a set of road signs (when x do y) leading up to and climaxing in a concrete event in the near future of his audience. In fact, the only end in view in this section of the speech is that of the temple, as predicted by Jesus in v. 2.

As we will see below, Mark 13,27 contains the only ergative clause with the Son of Man as agent in the entire gospel: *ἐισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ*, a clause edited by Matthew to make the angels the agent<sup>(46)</sup>. In stark contrast with the grammatical role assigned to the Son of Man in 13,27 is the role assigned to the audience of Jesus in vv. 5b-23. The audience is addressed by means of second person plural verbs and pronouns, most often appearing in the direct or indirect object slot, or as subjects of passive verbs or of imperatives pronounced by Jesus or by the false prophets (v. 21 *ἴδε ὧδε ὁ Χριστός*)(<sup>47</sup>). The “you” subject

(<sup>45</sup>) Besides the two instances in Mark 13, there is only one additional instance in 3,26: *καὶ εἰ ὁ σατανᾶς ἀνέστη ἐφ’ ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἐμερίσθη οὐ δύναται στήναι ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει*.

(<sup>46</sup>) Cf. Matt 24,31: *καὶ ἐπισυνάξουσιν τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ* with the angels as subject. The clause in Mark 13,26, with the Son of Man as agent of a material process, is in contrast especially with the Son of Man clauses of Mark 8-11. The depiction of the Son of Man as a patient sufferer which begins in 8,31, reaches a climax in the third passion prediction (10,33-34) as Mark piles on 7 verbs with the Son of Man on the receiving end of the actions of his enemies: *παραδοθήσεται...κατακρινούσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν...ἐμπαΐξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτόν καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν*.

(<sup>47</sup>) “You” as subject of imperatives in vv. 5b-23, note especially those with explicit subject, and one imperative issued by the false prophets. *βλέπετε μὴ θροσίσθε, βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐ’ αὐτούς, μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε, λαλεῖτε, προσεύχεσθε, ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, μὴ πιστεύετε, ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε* (9). “You” as object (direct or indirect) or as passive subject in vv. 5b-23: *μὴ τις ὑμᾶς πλανήσῃ, παραδώσουσιν ὑμᾶς, δαρήσεσθε, ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ βασιλέων σταθήσεσθε, ὅταν ἄγωσιν ὑμᾶς, παραδιδόντες, ὃ ἐάν δοθῇ ὑμῖν, ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι, ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ, προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα* (10).

does not appear as agent in any ergative clauses, and only in 4 out of a total of 23 clauses as subject of verbs of seeing, hearing, speaking or being<sup>(48)</sup>. Finally, in 8 clauses (vv 14-17) the third person singular and plural subjects are clearly to be understood as subsets of “you”: “When you see the desolating sacrilege, then, let those who are in Judea...” In this final category, the subjects are commanded to flee, not to turn back to collect anything, not to go down or re-enter their houses, and a woe is pronounced on those that are pregnant or breastfeeding. Of particular note are those clauses with “you” as explicit subject, especially v. 9: βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοὺς and v. 23: ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε. Both are particularly emphatic, the former serving to increase the immediacy and relevance of the road signs for the “you,” audience, and the latter to contrast “you,” with those who might be deceived (v. 22), and to underline further the colophon closing this section<sup>(49)</sup>. In my analysis of Acts 27, I showed that ergativity is central to the author’s rhetorical strategy, as he depicts God as the ultimate Agent who drives events forward, the apparently efficacious actions of men notwithstanding<sup>(50)</sup>. In Mark 13, procedural register is constructed on the basis of “when” clauses, the associated behavior expressed in imperatives, and patterns of ergativity which reveal the agency of the enemies of the disciples as the followers of Christ are to be victimized in various ways. The role assumed by Jesus in the speech is that of the (nearly) all knowing and authoritative master who knows and controls future events, and is thus able to supply concrete instructions to guide his disciples as they navigate the dangerous road ahead.

The identification of Jesus’ followers with the sufferings of the master is for Mark a fundamental element of discipleship, a fact noted by most commentators. The clause breakdown I provide helps us to understand how that message is conveyed in Mark 13. In vv. 5b-23, the disciples are, similarly to the Son of man in the three passion predictions, consistently described as being in the receiving end of the actions of their enemies, as they are handed over, beaten, hated, and

<sup>(48)</sup> ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε, τί λαλήσητε, οὐ γὰρ ἔστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες, “Οταν δὲ ἴδητε .

<sup>(49)</sup> See LAMBRECHT, *Die Redaktion*, 171; BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Last Days*, 420-421; MATEOS, *Markos 13*, 325. YARBRO COLLINS (*Mark*, 614) calls this clause in v. 23 a “summary statement”. FRANCE (*The Gospel*, 530) however, ignores this and concludes his discussion of v. 23 with the words: “The end has begun”. He believes v. 23 “sums up the discourse so far”, but that with vv. 24-27 “the answer to the question is now coming to its climax”.

<sup>(50)</sup> MARTIN-ASENSIO, *Transitivity*, 71-79.

killed. Their suffering notwithstanding, the disciples should draw significant encouragement from the fact that it is God, not their temporally bound oppressors who ultimately drives events forward. The two positive references to the necessity of things (vv. 7,10) suggest divine providence and ordering of events. Further, in vv. 19-20, at the height of the suffering, Mark goes out of his way, grammatically, to highlight God's agency in creation and election: "Since the beginning of God's creation, which He created" (v. 19) ... on behalf on the elect, whom He chose" (v. 20).

Rather than cooling off eschatological expectations, the ὅταν clauses in this section point forward irrevocably and by means of road signs to the events described in vv. 14-16. After those final instructions, Jesus refers back to the question and is able to say with unmistakable finality: "But you watch out, I have told you all things", that is, I have answered your question, I have given you the road signs that will precede the temple's destruction. The procedural-paraeletic language of this section, the language of road signs with its increasing urgency and relevance, makes sense while human action is a possibility. That appears not to be the case in the following section of the speech.

### 3. *The Coming of the Son of Man: vv. 24-27*

The strong adversative Ἀλλὰ separates the material starting in v. 24 from the previous section and introduces a new scene<sup>(51)</sup>. While Mark does repeat the ἐν ἐκείνοις ταῖς ἡμέραις of the previous section, the adversative together with the preposition μετὰ qualifying the phrase τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην indicates a new, later time frame. The distinction of vv. 24-27 as a separate section, however, does not rest upon the presence of the two particles. Missing from this section is everything that drove the message home to Jesus' audience in vv. 5b-23: Imperatives, second person verbs and pronouns, anaphoric references to the disciples' question, the language of road signs as described above including the ὅταν clauses, and any reference to deceivers, opponents, or any human action whatsoever. The overall urgency and immediacy of the previous section are absent from vv. 24-27.

Vv. 24-25, described fairly by Dyer as "a Markan pastiche of

(51) Thus TROCMÉ, *L'Évangile*, 327; LAMBRECHT, *Die Redaktion*, 174. MATEOS (*Marcos 13*, 331) though believes it remains connected with the previous one by the repetition of tribulation, "in those days", and "then". FRANCE (*The Gospel*, 531-532) however, warns against deriving too much from the adversative.

Septuagintal allusions”<sup>(52)</sup>, appears to be a poetic transition passage, written in language taken directly from a large, familiar stock of eschatological material, which includes Isaiah 13,10 (LXX): καὶ σκοπισθήσεται τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς. In Isaiah 13 the context is the day of the Lord coming with judgment against Babylon and the nations, as well as sinful humanity as a whole (13,11). I concur with Wright in seeing this language as symbolic, and conveying the message that what follows is of “earth-shattering” significance<sup>(53)</sup>. I differ from Wright, France<sup>(54)</sup> and Hatina<sup>(55)</sup> in that I see in this section (vv. 24-27) a new temporal horizon in the speech, its only connection with the previous material being that it is God who ultimately drives the events depicted in both. The previous section, vv. 5b-23 is the rhetorical core of the speech. It contains the answer to the disciples’ question regarding the temple’s demise, delivered in a crescendo fashion of increasing immediacy and relevance until the final road sign is given by means of the attention-catching formula “when x then y” (vv. 14-23). In the colophon of v. 23, the Markan Jesus wraps up the procedural-paraenetic section, and, in contrast to those who might be deceived, concludes: “But as for you, watch out, for I have told you all things”. With this colophon, the Markan Jesus concludes his answer to the disciples’ question, and the subject of the temple’s destruction is now closed.

Starting with v. 24, hearers of the speech cannot miss the change in setting. The immediacy, the urgency and direct relevance for “you” of the earlier section are gone. In fact, in contrast to the concreteness of “you”, as the object of most clauses in the previous section, the object of the Son of Man’s gathering are the elect “out of the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven (v. 27). A new act in the unfolding drama has begun, in which there is no longer a need to watch out. Further, there are no imperatives and no temporal references other than the double τότε of “and then they will see...” (v. 26) and “and then he will send his angels” (v. 27), which communicate indeterminacy in the future, in contrast to the specificity of the ὅταν + second person plural imperatives or ὅταν plus τότε of the previous section. Without

<sup>(52)</sup> DYER, *The Prophecy*, 267.

<sup>(53)</sup> N.T. WRIGHT, *Jesus and the Victory of God*. II: Christian Origins and the Question of God (Minneapolis, MN 1996) 362.

<sup>(54)</sup> FRANCE, *The Gospel*, 530.

<sup>(55)</sup> T.R. HATINA, “The Focus of Mark 13,24-27: The Parousia, or the Destruction of the Temple?”, *BBR* 6 (1996) 43-66.

engaging with these fundamental differences, Wright argues, following Caird, that vv. 24-27 are still part of Jesus' answer to the question raised by his disciples, and that the entire speech makes reference to the destruction of the Jerusalem temple<sup>(56)</sup>.

Clouds of controversy continue to swirl around vv. 26-27. To what extent and how is this passage dependent on Daniel 7?; directly related to the previous question, what is the direction of the Son of Man's<sup>(57)</sup> "coming," or "going" (ἐρχόμενον)? How are we to explain the changes in clause structure, including the insertion of the articles, from the Aramaic of Daniel 7,13 to the Greek of Mark 13,26, and other New Testament passages? What is the referent of "they will see" (ὁψονται) in v. 26? How is this section, radically different as it is, tied thematically to the material before and after it in the speech of Jesus? I will address these points in order.

The degree of dependency of Mark on Daniel 7 is one of the *cruces interpretum* of this passage. Is it only a clear allusion to Daniel, or are we to use the Danielic text to interpret Mark 13 in its details, assuming a similarly detailed association on the part of the audience / readership of the speech?<sup>(58)</sup> The focus of the present article is linguistic and literary, and matters of intertextuality are outside our scope. However, I wish to address this point in terms of what Wright, France and Hatina claim, based on their reading of Daniel, ought to be the interpretation of Mark 13,26-27. Thus, as appears to be the case in Daniel 7, Wright and France argue that the movement of the Son of Man in Mark 13,26 ought to be understood as upward to God's abode, in order to be enthroned and receive eternal dominion<sup>(59)</sup>. From a literary point of

<sup>(56)</sup> WRIGHT, *Jesus and the Victory*, 341.

<sup>(57)</sup> The exponential growth in the literature on the Son of Man in recent decades is illustrated in C.C. CARAGOUNIS, *The Son of Man*. Vision and interpretation (WUNT 38; Tübingen 1986) 9-10, n. 1-2. For a recent summary and evaluation see D. BURKETT, *The Son of Man Debate*. A History and Evaluation (SNTS MS 107; Cambridge 1999). From a literary-critical standpoint see H.L. CHRONIS, "To Reveal and to Conceal: A Literary-Critical Perspective on the Son of Man in Mark", *NTS* 51 (2005) 459-481.

<sup>(58)</sup> See on this HATINA ("The Focus", 60, n.66) admitting the problematic nature of the assumption, and qualifying it in terms of "a certain degree of familiarity". But this qualification is absent from his statement in the note 74.

<sup>(59)</sup> On the basis of Daniel 7, argues WRIGHT (*The Victory*, 361), including footnote 156, we should interpret the coming as towards God, not downward to earth: "Nothing in Daniel, in the rereadings of Daniel in the first century, or in the teaching of Jesus as we have studied it, pushes the reading of Mark 13,26 in that direction". See also FRANCE, *The Gospel*, 534. HATINA ("The Focus", 63),

view, however, the Markan Jesus, identified with the Son of Man at various points in the gospel, has no need to ascend to heaven to receive dominion. In Mark, Jesus has already been connected with the clouds, the realm of God, in two key moments in the gospel, namely, the baptism (1,9-11) and the transfiguration (9,2-13). In the former, the heavens are rent, and a voice is heard from heaven saying “you are my beloved son.” As Witherington has argued, the words used in Mark 1:11 are reminiscent of enthronement language (Ps 2,7; Isa 42,1), and suggest Jesus is being enthroned by God as king at the outset of his ministry<sup>(60)</sup>. In 9,2-13, as Jesus is transfigured on the mountain before Peter, James and John, a cloud overshadows them, and the familiar voice is heard again “this is my beloved son, listen to him.” Unlike Daniel 7,13ff, Mark 13,24-27 includes no references to God or the Ancient of Days before whom כִּבְרָאִים (MT) / ὃς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (LXX) appears. Secondly the context in Daniel is judgment (e.g. v. 7,26), but in Mark 13,24-27 there is no mention of judgment, but only of coming with glory and power, and gathering of the elect from the end of the earth to the end of heaven. In our passage, the Son of Man is seen by “they”, presumably human beings, as he advances in the clouds in order to gather his elect from the whole earth. Thus, not only those who see his coming, but the beneficiaries of that coming, his elect, are people located on earth.

In addition to what we gather from the immediate context, Scott shed some light on the issue with an insightful and influential discussion of clause structure in the Aramaic and LXX / Theod. Greek *vis-à-vis* the Greek of Mark 13,26<sup>(61)</sup>. Scott pointed out that in the MT of Daniel 7,13b, as well as in the OG and Theod. Greek versions, the clause “in (or upon or with) the clouds of heaven” was most likely not qualifying adverbially the manner of coming of “one like a son of man,” but was merely setting the scene, continuing from vv. 9-10. That is, the supposed adverbial phrase “with the clouds of heaven,” would merely indicate the locale of God’s throne and abode, as similar phrases do in

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however, seems to interpret the direction as downward, but only metaphorically, as the Son of Man is seen to be directly associated with the judgment and destruction of the temple. The natural reading of the Markan text itself, however, leads us to conclude that the moving is in fact downward. Thus HOOKER, *Mark*, 319.

<sup>(60)</sup> WITHERINGTON, *The Gospel*, 50.

<sup>(61)</sup> R.B.Y. SCOTT, “Behond He Cometh with Clouds”, *NTS* 5 (1955-1956) 127-132. See also N. PERRIN, “Mark XIV.62: The End Product of a Christian Peshet Tradition?”, *NTS* 12 (1966) 150-155.

Ezekiel and elsewhere. Lastly, the clouds are a theophanic symbol in the Hebrew scriptures, and it seems far more natural for the clause in Dan 7,13 to be describing God's abode, rather than the fashion of the one like a son of man's coming. In light of this, it is curious, argues Scott, that in the New Testament quotations of this passage, the order of the clause is altered, to make ἐν νεφέλαις qualify the manner of the Son of Man's coming, affirming as well that his coming is seen by humans on earth. In the Christian context, therefore, we no longer have the visionary setting in which God's heavenly abode is opened up to the seer's view. Instead, the Son of Man is now seen coming with the clouds to earth. The change in clause structure effectively emphasizes this new perspective in the New Testament context.

Thus, Mark is indeed using the Daniel passage, but he rewrites it in order to apply it to the Son of Man's future coming to earth, to vindicate and gather the elect. As we saw in the analysis of the previous section, in v. 20, Mark is emphasizing that the elect are God's: "But on behalf of the elect, which He chose, [the Lord] shortened the days." In v. 27, however, the elect are the Son of Man's elect<sup>(62)</sup>, and the manner of his coming to gather them is depicted in the language of theophany<sup>(63)</sup>, the coming or appearing of God Himself upon the cloud on behalf of His people, as in Ex 34,5<sup>(64)</sup>. Downward coming is in fact the natural reading of our text in the context of the section and the entire chapter.

For the determination of the referent of "they will see" in v. 26, Pesch suggested we should turn to the trial scene of 14,62 and allow that passage to shed light on 13,26. The subject thus ought to be understood, argues Pesch, as the opponents of Jesus and his word<sup>(65)</sup>. This is also Hatina's view<sup>(66)</sup>. But the aspect of judgment or condemna-

<sup>(62)</sup> The possessive pronoun αὐτοῦ is omitted by D, L, W, and others, but the reading which includes the possessive is generally acknowledged to be the original one.

<sup>(63)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY (*Last Days*, 430) affirms: "A theophany is always from heaven to the world of humankind...the representative of heaven comes from heaven to accomplish God's purpose in the world". See also E. ADAMS, *The Stars will Fall from Heaven* (LNTS 347; New York 2007) 151. See also SCOTT, "Behold", 132; CARAGOUNIS, *Vision and Interpretation*, 74; J. LUZARRAGA, *Las tradiciones de la Nube en la Biblia y en el Judaísmo primitivo* (AnBib 54; Rome 1973) 220.

<sup>(64)</sup> In this reference, the theophany is a coming down of YHWH upon the cloud (κατέβη).

<sup>(65)</sup> PESCH, *Naherwartungen*, 168.

<sup>(66)</sup> HATINA, "Who", 24-27. The sharp distinction between insiders and "bystanders" Hatina sees in Mark 8,38-9,1 does not take into account that Jesus'



tion which could be inferred for “you will see”, in the trial scene is completely absent in vv. 24-27, a fact noted by many<sup>(67)</sup>. The third person plural ὄψονταί is more likely an instance of the impersonal plural in place of a passive form, a feature long recognized as characteristic of Markan redactional style<sup>(68)</sup>. Interestingly, France shares this interpretation, and is thus forced to suggest that what is seen by humans on earth are the “consequences” of the Son of Man’s heavenly enthronement<sup>(69)</sup>. As expected with other examples of the impersonal plural subject in Mark, Matthew supplies the explicit subject in his parallel passage by inserting πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς in 24,30.

In order to understand Mark’s usage of ὄψονταί we must take into account the thematic importance of verbs of seeing in the gospel as a whole, and in the Olivet Discourse in particular. Geddert’s work brought to scholarly attention the consistent, “technical” use of βλέπω in Mark, every usage of which “appears intended by the author to contribute to a carefully devised call for discernment ...”<sup>(70)</sup>. Unfortunately, Geddert fails to include ὁράω in his analysis, and only makes a passing reference to it in his brief discussion of 13,26. In fact, of the 15 instances of βλέπω in Mark, none are future forms, and future

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words of warning are motivated by Peter’s refusal to accept the way of the cross. Thus Peter is in fact part of “this sinful and adulterous generation”. Rather than conflating the three Markan references to the coming of the Son of Man to argue a uniform meaning for all of them (judgment), taking each in its own context seems more productive and less likely to result in strained interpretations. TAYLOR (*The Gospel*, 569) suggests that in 14,62, the combination of Psalm 110,1 and Daniel 7,13 shows that “the emphasis lies on enthronement”. I would argue that in chapter 8 Mark suggests a separate “snapshot” of the same event, taken from the angle of judgment, while in 13,26 what is highlighted is salvation and vindication of those same disciples who were told to experience suffering in their near future.

<sup>(67)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY (*Last Days*, 430) notes that theophany can involve judgment or salvation, but “By accident or design, however, the discourse is silent on the latter aspect”. Thus also YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 614. Characteristically, GEDDERT (*Watchwords*, 227) believes judgment is neither unambiguously excluded nor unambiguously included, and — for him — Mark has made the speech intentionally ambiguous.

<sup>(68)</sup> See C.H. TURNER, “Markan Usage: Notes, Critical and Exegetical on the Second Gospel”, *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark*. An Edition of C. H. Turner’s ‘Notes on Marcan Usage’ together with Other Comparable Studies (ed. J.K. ELLIOTT) (NTS 71; Leiden 1993) 4; TAYLOR, *The Gospel*, 47. FRANCE (*The Gospel*, 535) also believes this to be an instance of Mark’s impersonal plural usage.

<sup>(69)</sup> FRANCE, *The Gospel*, 535.

<sup>(70)</sup> GEDDERT, *Watchwords*, 60.

forms of “to see” are realized with ὁράω instead, as in 13,26; 14,62, and 16,7. The same holds true for Matthew and Luke, with one exception, the quotation of Isaiah in Matt 13,14, which has the future form of βλέπω: βλέποντες βλέψετε καὶ οὐ μὴ ἴδητε. Thus, Mateos is correct when he argues in regard to ὁψοντοί, “como en otros pasajes ‘ver’ equivale a conocer”<sup>(71)</sup>. Seeing is for Mark tantamount to perceiving and understanding, independently of the seeing verb used. In the Olivet Discourse, the disciples must watch out in response to the events that will unfold in their near future, which include attempts by “many” to deceive them. As we pointed out above, in the section made up of vv. 24-27, human action is no longer required or possible, and the coming of the Son of Man will be seen, that is, known and understood. The verb in its Markan context suggest the revealing of that which was before only partially grasped by disciples, as well as the object of counterfeiting by false christs.

As we mentioned above, the clause ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ (v. 27), is the only clause with the Son of Man as agent in an ergative clause among the 14 Markan Son of Man sayings. That Mark 13 is the context of the Son of Man’s most efficacious activity, grammatically speaking, in the entire gospel is not surprising. In the main section of the discourse (5b-23), the disciples are given a consistent patient role, as Jesus predicts they will be, similarly to their master in earlier and later material, handed over, beaten, and, in some cases killed, in a crescendo of suffering which culminates in vv. 14ff. In vv. 26-27, however, the disciples are given a glimpse of final vindication and salvation, but only in an indeterminate, unknown future, as the Son of Man comes powerfully and gloriously to take them to himself, in a manner reminiscent of the coming of God on behalf of His people.

#### 4. *The interpretive Key to the Speech: vv. 28-37*

In v. 28 Jesus turns again the focus of his speech to his disciples. The imperative “learn” is the only instance of the verb in Mark, and underlines the importance of understanding this parable. It also marks the beginning of a section, as Villota Herrero has shown, where verbs of knowing predominate<sup>(72)</sup>. The particle δέ together with the abrupt change in scene, characters and topic marks the beginning of the new section. The colophon ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω γρηγορεῖτε of v. 37 brings the section and the entire speech to its conclusion.

<sup>(71)</sup> MATEOS, *Marcos 13*, 360.

<sup>(72)</sup> VILLOTA HERRERO, *Palabras*, 27.

A detailed analysis reveals that this material is in highly cohesive with the rest of Mark 13, shares many of the fundamental structuring elements we have discussed above, and provides an interpretation of the oration by means of two complementary parables and their explanatory material. I side with Hooker, Mateos, Yarbrow Collins, and the UBS Greek text<sup>(73)</sup> against the NA27, Beasley-Murray, Lambrecht Villota Herrero<sup>(74)</sup> and others, in seeing two distinct sections and not three in vv. 28-37, as follows:

Parable about knowing: Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συχῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολὴν (vv. 28-31)

Parable about not knowing: Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν (vv. 32-37).

As Mateos points out, Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συχῆς (v. 28a) and Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης (v. 32) are parallel constructions, each starting a new sub-section<sup>(75)</sup>. In v. 28, Jesus picks up again the procedural style of ὅταν clauses plus imperatives to remind his audience of the final road sign detailed in vv. 14-23, given in answer to the request of the disciples for a sign that will signal when “all these things will be fulfilled”. The parable of the fig tree contains a ὅταν (when you see...) clause followed by the knowledge which results from the seeing: “You know that summer is near”. In v. 29 Jesus gives the application of the parable to the lives of the disciples: “In this way also, when you see all these things happening, know that it (or he) is near, even at the gate”<sup>(76)</sup>. The two ὅταν clauses connect audience and readers to similar clauses in vv. 7, 11, and 14, and to the question of v. 4, and convey specific guidance in procedural register, the language of road signs, their correct interpretation and associated behavior. V. 31, prefaced by the formulaic Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν (12x in Mark) is Jesus’ emphatic promise that this generation will not pass until ταῦτα πάντα are fulfilled. As I detailed in my discussion of vv. 5b-23, πάντα and ταῦτα πάντα are anaphoric, point back to the “all these things” (ταῦτα

<sup>(73)</sup> HOOKER, *The Gospel*, 320-325; MATEOS, *Marcos 13*, 157-158; YARBROW COLLINS (*Mark*, 615) correctly sees in vv. 28-31 “an argument supporting imminent expectation”.

<sup>(74)</sup> BEASLEY-MURRAY (*Jesus and the Last Days*, 449) suggests that vv. 30-32 belong together. LAMBRECHT (*Die Redaktion*, 286, 291-292) also separates vv. 30, 31 from 28-29. VILLOTA HERRERO (*Palabras*, 31-33) places vv. 30-32 together.

<sup>(75)</sup> MATEOS, *Marcos 13*, 158.

<sup>(76)</sup> YARBROW COLLINS (*Mark*, 616) has failed to see the two options are possible in ἐστίν. In any case “he” may still refer back to v. 14, as the participle ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ is masculine!

συντελεῖσθαι πάντα) of the disciples' question in v. 4, and refer, as the question did, to the destruction of the temple. V. 31b merely reinforces and elaborates on the Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν of v. 30, and is in stark contrast to the words of the deceivers, the false prophets and false christs of vv. 6, 21-22: οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται). There can be little doubt that v. 29 refers back to v. 14:

Ὅταν δὲ ἴδῃτε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ... τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευτέωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη (v. 14).

Ὅταν ἴδῃτε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις (v. 29).

In contrast to the complex event referred to in v. 29 as ταῦτα πάντα, which will certainly be fulfilled within the lifespan of Jesus' audience<sup>(77)</sup> is another event, for which no signs are available and the timing of which is unknown. "But regarding that day or that hour, no one knows..." (v. 32). These words begin a new sub-section which includes its own "parable" and associated paraenesis, but is devoid of ὅταν clauses. The only references to time in these 6 verses are expressed in negative terms: οὐδεὶς οἶδεν (v. 32) ... οὐκ οἶδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρὸς ἐστὶν (v. 33) ... οὐν· οὐκ οἶδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται (v. 35). In this second sub-section, the simile illustrates not knowing when "the time" is, and having, therefore, to remain alert at all times (v. 33). The noun καιρὸς appears 5 times in Mark, and its usage seems to denote specific, right, or even climactic time<sup>(78)</sup>. "This is like — continues the Markan Jesus — a man who, having left his house, went away on a journey. He gave each of his servants charge of his work, and he commanded the gate keeper to remain watching". In the final verse, and colophon of the entire speech, the Markan Jesus widens his potential audience to include all disciples ("I say to all"). For readers and listening audience alike, the coming lord of the household is identified with the coming Son of Man of v. 26, whose coming is likewise predicted in an indeterminate future.

The 4 imperatives in this subsection: Βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε (v. 33, ἀγρυπνεῖτε here qualifies Βλέπετε); γρηγορεῖτε (v. 35) and γρηγορεῖτε

<sup>(77)</sup> This is the natural sense of ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη, though alternative views abound, many motivated by a desire to save the Markan Jesus from an obvious mistake, that is, the alleged prediction of the parousia within a generation of his audience. I have shown that these words, together with the rest of the sub-section made up of vv. 28-31, refer to the destruction of the temple, and not the Son of Man's coming as described in vv. 26-27.

<sup>(78)</sup> Thus in Mark 1,15; 11,13; 12,2. Perhaps less so in 10,30.

(v. 37) are used synonymously and all suggest the adoption of an attitude of constant vigilance and alertness. By means of these verbs, Mark effectively connects the Olivet Discourse with the Gethsemane episode, where Jesus commands his disciples to remain alert (γρηγορεῖτε 14,34; γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε( 14,38). The disciples, however, are twice caught sleeping (καθεύδοντας 14,37, 40). Geddert and Villota Herrero have argued convincingly that the βλέπετε, commands of 5b-23 and the γρηγορεῖτε / ἀγρυπνεῖτε commands of the final section are fundamentally different, not only lexically, but also from a literary point of view. All of the instances of βλέπω outside Mark 13 occur before Mark 13, while all the instances of γρηγορέω outside of Mark 13 occur after this chapter.

### III. The Language of Mark 13: From Text to Context

In Mark 13,5b-23, I have argued Mark is deploying a rare procedural register by which behavior is prescribed for the audience within specific time frames as indicated by the characteristic ὅταν clauses plus imperatives. I have also discussed how choices from the transitivity network of Greek contribute to this procedural register by depicting certain participants as agents, while others, in most cases the “you” subject, are placed on the receiving end of the violent actions of others. Unlike more typical instances of procedural register, the audience in Mark 13 is not in a position to carry out any actions, other than understand, watch out, not fear, and escape. The course of “action” prescribed for them amounts to adopting the correct response and attitude in the face of the violent acts of their enemies. The features of procedural register are completely absent from the following section of the speech, vv. 24-27, in which the Markan Jesus opens a new temporal horizon in his oration, delivering material unrelated to the disciples’ question, that is, to the temple’s destruction and associated tribulation. In contrast to the events described in vv. 5b-23, no roadmap is available to forewarn of the Son of Man’s coming.

Porter has wondered whether we can “extrapolate from the text back to re-creation of the context of situation, as Halliday seems to want us to be able to do...”<sup>(79)</sup>. My analysis has shown how expressions of the ideational function of language (transitivity patterns

<sup>(79)</sup> S.E. PORTER, “Dialect and Register in the Greek of the New Testament”, *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts*. Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation (ed. M.D. CARROLL R.) (JSOTSS 299; Sheffield 2000) 205.

including ergative clauses), interpersonal (role of authoritative prophet, teacher, master expressed through imperatives, etc.), and textual (cohesion by means of ὅταν clauses and other elements), together constitute a functional variety of language we have called “procedural”. A brief comparison of our text with the parallel passage in Matthew 24 will help us to draw some conclusions regarding the situation that required Mark to edit the Olivet Discourse episode as he has, *vis-à-vis* Matthew’s account of it.

In Matthew 24,3, the disciples are asking Jesus: When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your parousia and of the end of the age? (τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς σῆς παρουσίας καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος;) thus “sign” is in the Matthean account associated with the parousia, not the destruction of the temple. Further, Matthew associates the word τέλος with the preaching of the gospel to all nations, while Mark’s two references appear in the build up to the desolating sacrilege and refer only to the hardships that will precede it. Additionally, Matthew has done away with the first three ὅταν clauses in the Markan account, including the one in the disciples’ question, leaving only the fourth that introduces the abomination of desolation itself. Gone from Matthew are also two of the commands to watch out, strategically placed by the Markan Jesus in Mark 13. The first is the emphatic βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτούς of Mark 13,9, and the second the concluding and colophonic ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε προεῖρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα of 13,23, which concludes the main section of the Markan speech and refers back, as we saw, to the question of the disciples. Thus, the build-up to the desolation, as well as linguistic elements that made the process leading up to it immediate and relevant to the audience are removed from Matthew’s version of the speech. Instead, Matthew emphasizes the second horizon in the discourse, the coming of the Son of Man, which he calls the παρουσία, describing it in substantially greater detail than Mark. This includes the supplying of a subject to Mark’s “they will see” (all the tribes of the earth), and other details. Matthew seems also to be wishing to emphasize the imminent expectation of the parousia, as he has the evil servant say in his heart, “my lord is taking his time...” (24,48).

What we suggested in our analysis of Mark 13 becomes somewhat clearer when we compare Mark’s account of the Olivet Discourse with Matthew’s. For Mark, the core, the highlight of the speech is, as we have shown above, the section clearly answering the disciples’ question in regard to the destruction of the temple. The Markan Jesus

delivers this message in a crescendo of relevance and impact for his audience that cannot be missed. Indeed, the core of this message is delivered in a procedural register to emphasize time frames, and associated actions and behaviors. The victimization of the disciples in the buildup to the desolating sacrilege, matches the victimization of the Son of Man in the passion predictions, especially the third and most detailed one. The suffering of the disciples within the time frame of their own lives, however, is to be compensated only when the Son of Man comes in power in an indeterminate but certain future to gather his elect. While Mark would have his readers focus on the first and immediate horizon, Matthew has seen fit to remove the urgency, the relevance and impact of the first, and focus instead on the second. The significance of these linguistic choices for the discussion of the date of Mark, and Matthew, cannot be missed.

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#### SUMMARY

I will rely on insights from Halliday's register theory to explain the Markan Jesus' use of a functional variety of language I call procedural register. The identification of procedural register in the main section of the Olivet Discourse (vv. 5b-23) will be shown to reveal the rhetorical design of the discourse within a first temporal horizon, of direct relevance for the audience and addressing the disciples' question (v. 4). The absence of procedural register in vv. 24-27 indicates the opening of a second horizon in the speech, lacking immediate impact for the audience and no longer addressing the disciples' question.

## **Zur christologischen Relevanz des Furchtmotivs im Lukasevangelium**

“Alle aber gerieten außer sich über die Majestät Gottes”. Dieser Satz bezieht sich nicht auf die Gottesoffenbarung am Sinai oder eine andere Selbstkundgabe Gottes im Alten Testament. Er beschreibt vielmehr die Reaktion der Menge auf eine Heilung Jesu im Lukasevangelium (9,37-43). In dieser Heilung, einer Dämonenaustreibung, kulminiert eine den ersten Hauptteil des Evangeliums durchziehende Reihe von Machttaten Jesu, auf die die Augen- und Ohrenzeugen mit Furcht und Entsetzen reagieren. Aber nicht nur im Kontext von Wundergeschichten spielt das Furchtmotiv eine zentrale Rolle, sondern auch in drei christologischen Schlüsseltexten des Evangeliums: in der Geburtsgeschichte am Anfang, in der Verklärungsgeschichte am Übergang vom ersten zum zweiten Hauptteil sowie im letzten Erscheinungsbericht am Ende des Evangeliums.

Auch wenn Lk in einigen der genannten Texte unverkennbar an Mk anknüpft, stellt er das Motiv der Furcht in einen neuen Interpretationsrahmen und entfaltet es selbstständig. Es lohnt deshalb, diese in der Lk-Forschung weitestgehend ausgeblendete Fragestellung aufzunehmen und nach der christologischen Relevanz des Furchtmotivs im dritten Evangelium zu fragen.

Grundlage der folgenden Erörterungen sind diejenigen Texte, in denen der Begriff φόβος und weitere dazu weitgehend synonym gebrauchte Termini im Kontext der Begegnung von Menschen mit der Offenbarung Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu verwendet werden<sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Synonym zu φόβος κτλ. werden ἔκστασις κτλ., θάμβος κτλ., πτοέω sowie ἐκπλήσσομαι und einige wenige Male in dieser Bedeutung auch θαυμάζω gebraucht; vgl. Lk 11,14 sowie 2,18; 8,25 und 9,43, wo θαυμάζω auf einen der zuvor genannten Begriffe folgt. Mit Ausnahme von πτοέω finden sich sämtliche dieser Begriffe bereits bei Mk in derselben Verwendung. Bis auf ἐκπλήσσομαι und θαυμάζω werden sie im Sinne der Furcht angesichts der Begegnung mit der sichtbaren Seite der Wirklichkeit Gottes bereits in der LXX gebraucht. θαυμάζω begegnet verschiedentlich in der hellenistischen Literatur; vgl. dazu G. THEISSEN, *Urchristliche Wundergeschichten*. Ein Beitrag zur formgeschichtlichen Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien (StNT 8; Gütersloh 1990) 79. Insgesamt aber seien vormtl. Parallelen für das Admirationsmotiv (“Staunen, Fürchten, Sich-Entsetzen, Verwundern”) “nicht so häufig” (s. 78, 79).



Die Darlegung gliedert sich in drei Punkte. Zunächst wird das Verständnis der Furcht in den genannten christologischen Schlüsseltexten untersucht, sodann ihr Verständnis im Kontext der Machttaten Jesu in Lk 4–9. Schließlich werden die wichtigsten motivgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der Ikonischen Entfaltung der Furchthematik erörtert.

### I. Das Furchtmotiv in den Herrlichkeitsoffenbarungen des Lukasevangeliums

Lk verortet die wichtigsten Herrlichkeitsoffenbarungen in den christologischen Schlüsseltexten der Geburts-, der Verklärungs- und der Ostergeschichte. In ihnen wird die Furcht der Anwesenden als menschliche Reaktion auf eine Doxaoffenbarung interpretiert.

#### 1. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Offenbarung der Herrlichkeit Gottes in der Geburtsgeschichte (Lk 2,1-20)*

Nach der Geburtsgeschichte bewirkt die Erscheinung der göttlichen δόξα bei den Hirten eine "überaus große Furcht" (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν; v. 9). Die Deutung des Geschehens durch den Engel des Herrn dagegen löst bei ihnen zunächst keine erkennbare Reaktion aus. Die Rede des Engels wird vielmehr durch den Himmel selbst kommentiert: Die Menge der himmlischen Heerscharen stimmt einen Lobgesang Gottes an. Sie nimmt damit den menschlichen Lobpreis vorweg, der erst nach der Rückkehr der Herrlichkeit Gottes und seines Hofstaates (v. 15) in die jenseitige Welt erklingt. Erst danach kommt die weitere Geschichte der Hirten in Gang: Sie machen sich auf den Weg, sehen das Zeichen der ihnen verkündigten Geburt des Retters heute<sup>(2)</sup>, sagen es weiter und lösen mit ihrer Verkündigung bei den Hörern verwundertes Staunen (ἐθαύμασαν; v. 18) aus. Dann erst erklingt der Lobpreis Gottes auch aus dem Mund der Hirten.

Die Furcht der Hirten ist das Spiegelbild des gewaltigen Eindrucks, den der sichtbare Einbruch der himmlischen Wirklichkeit in die Welt der Menschen, das Herzutreten des Engels des Herrn und das Kommen Gottes in Gestalt seiner Lichtherrlichkeit (v. 9)<sup>(3)</sup>, hinterlässt. Furcht

<sup>(2)</sup> σήμερον dient bei Lk der Betonung der Gegenwart als der Zeit der eschatologischen Erfüllung, des Jetzt als der Zeit der gnädigen Errettung durch Gott; vgl. J.B. GREEN, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1997) 132, unter Hinweis auf Lk 4,21; 5,26; 19,9; 23,43.

<sup>(3)</sup> Im Zusammenhang mit vv. 13–15 ist davon auszugehen, dass die Doxa Gottes die Hirten nicht vom Himmel herab umstrahlte (v. 9), sondern auf die Erde hinabstieg; vgl. v. 15 und dazu F. BOVON, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (EKK 3/1;

ist die erste menschliche Reaktion auf die Geburt des göttlichen Retters, nicht freilich auf seine Geburt in Niedrigkeit, sondern auf die Doxa-Gestalt ihrer göttlichen Kundgabe. Die Offenbarung der Lichtherrlichkeit Gottes gilt den Hirten, die von ihr umleuchtet werden. Das Kind im Futtertrog dagegen bleibt davon äußerlich unberührt. Die Doxa-Offenbarung kommentiert ein Ereignis auf Erden und interpretiert es als göttliches Geschehen: In dem in Niedrigkeit geborenen Kind begegnet der göttliche Retter<sup>(4)</sup>, dessen auch Furcht erregende Hoheit sich bereits in der Doxa-Erscheinung des Anfangs ankündigt.

## 2. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Herrlichkeitserweise in der Verklärungsgeschichte (Lk 9,28-36)*

Auch in der Verklärungsgeschichte entzündet sich die Furcht der Jünger an der sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Selbstmanifestation Gottes. Sie erstreckt sich dann aber zugleich auf Jesus als den in Herrlichkeit geoffenbarten Sohn des Vaters. Die Verklärungsgeschichte hat Lk von Mk übernommen, jedoch stark bearbeitet. Zwei redaktionelle Eingriffe sind hier v.a. zu vermerken, die Einführung des Begriffs der δόξα und die Modifikation der Ursache der Furcht.

Die Erzählung gibt im weiteren Kontext des Lk eine vorläufige Antwort auf die seinen ersten Hauptteil durchziehende Frage: "wer ist dieser?". Die Antwort auf diese Frage wird mit Blick auf das Verhältnis Jesu zu Mose und Elija einerseits und zu Gott andererseits gegeben. Dabei werden zwei Deutungen einander gegenüber gestellt, die Sicht des Petrus und das Verständnis des Erzählers, der die Perspektive Gottes vertritt. Petrus, betäubt vom Glanz der Verklärung<sup>(5)</sup>, hört die Unterredung zwischen Mose, Elija und Jesus über dessen ἔξοδος in Jerusalem<sup>(6)</sup>, d.h. sein Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen sowie seine

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Zürich u.a. 1989) 124: "Die Herrlichkeit Gottes lebt nicht ohne den himmlischen Hofstaat".

<sup>(4)</sup> Zum spannungsreichen Nebeneinander von Hoheit und Niedrigkeit Jesu vgl. U. WILCKENS, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Band 1/4. Geschichte der urchristlichen Theologie. Die Evangelien, die Apostelgeschichte, die Johannesbriefe, die Offenbarung und die Entstehung des Kanons (Neukirchen-Vluyn 2005) 97-98, W.J. HARRINGTON, *Luke*. Gracious Theologian. The Jesus of Luke (Blackrock 1997) 17, 35-36, sowie GREEN, *Gospel*, 124.

<sup>(5)</sup> Vgl. BOVON, *Evangelium*, 497.

<sup>(6)</sup> Vgl. J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28/1-2; New York 1981) 800, der zu Recht darauf hinweist, dass es die Rolle der beiden

Himmelfahrt<sup>(7)</sup>, nicht. Darum deutet er ihre Zusammenkunft ausschließlich von dem her, was er sieht: drei Gestalten, die gleichermaßen in der himmlischen Doxa erstrahlen. Sie gleichstellend, will er jedem von ihnen eine Hütte bauen. Für den Erzähler ist dies eine grobe Fehldeutung: So redet einer, der nicht weiß, was er sagt (v. 33). Die Hauptintention des Erzählers ist es demgegenüber, die Singularität Jesu auch und gerade Mose und Elija gegenüber zu begründen.

Mose und Elija erscheinen wie Jesus in Doxa und kündigen seinen ἔξοδος in Jerusalem an. In dieser Wahrnehmung ihres prophetischen Amtes erschöpft sich ihre aktive Rolle in der Verklärungsgeschichte. Danach verabschieden sie sich aus der Erzählung (v. 33). Jesus bleibt „allein“ (μόνος) zurück (v. 36). Die Einzigkeit Jesu zeigt sich aber v.a. in der anschließenden Gottesoffenbarung, die als Doppelereignis von Herrlichkeits- und Wortoffenbarung geschildert wird. Beide Teile der Gottesrede bringen Jesu singuläre Stellung in der Geschichte Gottes mit den Menschen zum Ausdruck. In der Prädikation: „Dieser ist mein Sohn, der Auserwählte“, artikuliert sich dies im Verhältnis zu Gott, in der Aufforderung: „auf ihn hört“<sup>(8)</sup>, im Verhältnis zu den Menschen. Die Einzigkeit Jesu wird aber ebenso von der Erscheinung der Gegenwart Gottes in der Wolke beleuchtet. Die Wolke birgt die Herrlichkeit Gottes. Von seiner Doxa her bestimmt sich die Doxa Jesu, die bereits während seines Gebetes unmittelbar nach seiner Ankunft

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Propheten ist, „to relate that departure to their own prophetic role in the OT, to what Moses and the prophets have said of him“. Lk wird auf das Prophetenzeugnis über den Exodus Jesu in Lk 24,25-27.32.44-46 zurückkommen.

(7) ἔξοδος in der Bedeutung „Tod“ ist auch in der jüdisch-hellenistischen Literatur nachgewiesen; vgl. SapSal 3,2; 7,6; Philo, *Virt.* 77; Jos, *Ant.* 4,189; TNaph 1,1. Lk knüpft an diesen Sprachgebrauch an; dieser verbindet sich bei ihm jedoch mit dem Verständnis des Auszugs aus Ägypten als des grundlegenden Rettungsgeschehens, das Israel aus der ägyptischen Sklaverei schließlich ins verheißene Land führt. In Analogie dazu ist der Begriff ἔξοδος nicht allein auf Jesu Leiden in Jerusalem zu deuten, sondern auf das — auch soteriologische — Gesamtgeschehen von Leiden, Sterben, Auferstehen und der Himmelfahrt.

(8) Lk versteht diesen Satz im Sinne eines exklusiven Hörens auf Jesus. Dies ergibt sich zum einen aus der beschriebenen Funktion von Mose und Elija in der Geschichte, zum anderen aus Apg 3,22-23, wo wie in Lk 9,35 aus Dtn 18,15-20 zitiert wird. Die hier wie dort zitierte Aussage: αὐτοῦ ἀκούεσθε, hat in Apg 3 eindeutig exklusive Bedeutung: Wer auf jenen Propheten, Jesus, nicht hört, wird, so die Drohung, aus dem Volk ausgerottet werden. So verbinden sich hier Kontinuität und Diskontinuität, Kontinuität im Sinne der in der Geschichte Jesu kulminierenden atl. Prophetie und Diskontinuität im Sinne des exklusiven Anspruchs, dass Gott von nun an nur noch im Sohn zu hören ist.

auf dem Berg an ihm sichtbar wird (v. 29). Sie ist die äußere Manifestation seiner einzigartigen Gottesbeziehung, die ihm von Anfang an, d.h. vom Augenblick seiner Zeugung in der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes, wesenhaft eignet. Es ist die ihm als dem Sohn des Vaters eigene Herrlichkeit, die in der Verklärung augenblickshaft aufleuchtet und in die er dann mit der Auferstehung dauerhaft eingeht (24,26). Mose und Elija erscheinen demgegenüber in der Doxa der himmlischen Entourage Gottes<sup>(9)</sup>.

Die Furcht der Jünger entzündet sich in Lk 9 an der Offenbarung der göttlichen Gegenwart in der Wolke<sup>(10)</sup>. Sie beginnen sich zu fürchten, als sie in die Wolke hineingeraten, wo sie der Macht und der Herrlichkeit Gottes unmittelbar begegnen. Ihre Furcht wird bis zum Ende der Erzählung nicht aufgelöst, sie verwandelt sich vielmehr in Schweigen<sup>(11)</sup>, das sich bis zur zweiten Leidensankündigung (vv. 43-45) durchzieht<sup>(12)</sup>. Ein Teilaspekt des Schweigens der Furcht ist das Unverständnis. Was Petrus mit Blick auf die Doxa-Erscheinung Jesu meint verstanden zu haben, nämlich die Gleichstellung von Jesus mit Mose und Elija, erweist sich als Unverständnis. Als das verstanden Geglaupte durch die Gottesoffenbarung widerlegt wird, schweigen er und die beiden anderen Jünger: „und sie schwiegen und berichteten niemandem in jenen Tagen, was sie gesehen hatten“ (v. 36). Dieses Schweigen ist demnach Ausdruck der umfassenden Erschütterung ihres bisherigen Verständnisses Jesu. Nach dem Gesagten gilt das Schweigen der Furcht und des Nichtverstehens in Lk 9 damit der Offenbarung sowohl der spezifischen Gestalt der Doxa Jesu als auch seiner Niedrigkeit, wie sie durch den Hinweis auf den ἔξοδος Jesu zum Ausdruck gebracht wird<sup>(13)</sup>.

<sup>(9)</sup> Vgl. dazu im Einzelnen GREEN, *Gospel*, 380, und BOVON, *Evangelium*, 495.

<sup>(10)</sup> Vgl. BOVON, *Evangelium*, 500. Dieser Zusammenhang wird von H. BALZ, „φοβέω κτλ. D. Die Wortgruppe im Neuen Testament“, *TWNT* IX, 205, verkannt, der hier eine Beschränkung bzw. Psychologisierung der Furcht wahrnimmt.

<sup>(11)</sup> Dass bei Lk Furcht Schweigen aus sich heraussetzt, zeigt neben Lk 9,45 insbesondere auch Lk 24,37-51 (dazu s.u.). Vgl. ferner Lk 20,26 mit 20,19.

<sup>(12)</sup> Vgl. auch BOVON, *Evangelium*, 514, der für Lk 9,45 von der „schweigsame(n) Furcht“ der Jünger spricht.

<sup>(13)</sup> Die Spannung von Niedrigkeit und Hoheit Jesu zeigt sich in Lk 9 außerdem in der Verbindung der Dämonenheilung Lk 9,37-43a und der Leidensankündigung Lk 9,43b-45. Hier steht der das Entsetzen (ἐξεπλήσσοντο; v. 43a) angesichts der Dämonenheilung aufnehmenden Verwunderung (θαυμαζόντων) der Menge die Furcht der Jünger (ἐφοβοῦντο) angesichts der Leidensankündigung Jesu gegenüber (v. 45). Dazu s. auch BOVON, *Evangelium*, 520.

### 3. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Erscheinung des Auferstandenen in Herrlichkeit (Lk 24,36-49)*

Göttliche Doxa ist schließlich auch im letzten Erscheinungsbericht Ursache menschlicher Furcht<sup>(14)</sup>. Anders als in Lk 2 und 9 entzündet sich die Furcht hier aber nicht an der Offenbarung der Herrlichkeit Gottes, sondern an der Erscheinung des Auferstandenen. Lk umschreibt die Auferstehung Jesu als sein "Eingehen in seine Doxa (εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ; 24,26)"<sup>(15)</sup>. Alles, was Lk in Kap. 24 berichtet, handelt von diesem verherrlichten, in seine Doxa eingegangenen Christus<sup>(16)</sup>. Als solcher ist er Teil einer anderen — der himmlischen — Wirklichkeit und daher nicht mehr den Gesetzen von Raum und Zeit unterworfen. Er entschwindet den Augen der Emmausjünger, wird "unsichtbar" für sie (v. 31). Er ist zwar gegenwärtig, aber in anderer Gestalt, "als", wie er sagt, "ich noch bei euch war" (v. 44). Der Doxa-Begriff bezeichnet hier also anders als sonst nicht die sinnlich wahrnehmbare Lichtherrlichkeit, sondern qualifiziert die neue Leiblichkeit Jesu als die sichtbare Gestalt der ihm in der Auferweckung mitgeteilten göttlichen Herrlichkeit. Die Doxa Jesu bleibt freilich auch hier mit seiner Niedrigkeit im Leiden, erkennbar an den Wundmalen, verbunden<sup>(17)</sup>.

Die Furcht der versammelten Jüngerschaft wird in Lk 24,37-38 durch die äußere Gestalt des Doxa-Christus ausgelöst: Die Jünger glauben einen körperlosen Geist, ein Pneuma, zu sehen<sup>(18)</sup>. Die Furcht entsteht damit ähnlich wie in Lk 9 im Zusammenhang mit der Frage

<sup>(14)</sup> Das Motiv der Furcht durchzieht Lk 24 insgesamt. Am deutlichsten ist es im Zusammenhang mit der Erscheinung des in seine Herrlichkeit eingegangenen Christus vor der Vollzahl der Jünger — vgl. W. WIEFEL, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (ThHK 3; Berlin 1988) 413, und GREEN, *Gospel*, 852 — ausgearbeitet, wird aber durch die Begegnung der Frauen mit den beiden Engeln in Lk 24,1-8.22 vorbereitet. Insgesamt ist festzustellen, dass Lk das Furchtmotiv in 24,1-8 im Vergleich zu der Parallele Mk 16,1-8 zugunsten von Lk 24,36-38 abschwächt.

<sup>(15)</sup> Vgl. auch Apg 3,13.15, wo es sich bei ὁ θεός ... ἐδόξασεν τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν und ὃν ὁ θεὸς ᾔγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν um parallele Wendungen handelt.

<sup>(16)</sup> Die Doxa-Wirklichkeit des Auferstandenen manifestiert sich in seiner πνεῦμα-Erscheinung (vv. 37.39) und seinem plötzlichen Unsichtbarwerden (ἀφαντος; v. 31).

<sup>(17)</sup> Zum Ganzen vgl. H.-J. ECKSTEIN, "Leben nach Geist und Leib. Christologische und anthropologische Aspekte der Auferstehung bei Lukas", *Der aus Glauben Gerechte wird leben. Beiträge zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (ed. H.-J. ECKSTEIN) (Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel 5; Münster 2003) 181.

<sup>(18)</sup> Vgl. dazu J. KREMER, "πνεῦμα, αἶμα, τὸ pneuma Hauch, Atem, Wind, Geist", *EWNT* (1992) III, 283-284.

nach der Identität Jesu, hier nun freilich bezogen auf den Auferstandenen. Um die Intensität der Furcht der Jünger zu beschreiben, verwendet Lk drei Begriffe: Erschrecken (πτοέω), Furcht (ἔμφοβος) und Bestürzung (ταράσσω). Für Jesus zeigt die Furcht der Jünger ihr völliges Unverständnis der Situation<sup>(19)</sup>. Er fordert sie darum auf, seine Hände und Füße zu sehen und an den Wundmalen zu erkennen, dass er, Jesus selbst, es ist<sup>(20)</sup>, der ihnen begegnet, der gekreuzigte Auferstandene in der Einheit seiner Person. Darüber hinaus sollen sie ihn anfassen, um so die leibliche Realität seiner Auferstehung sehend zu erkennen<sup>(21)</sup>.

Die Jünger reagieren auf diese Aufforderung mit Unglauben und Verwunderung<sup>(22)</sup> — beides im weiteren Kontext auch Ausdrucksformen der Furcht<sup>(23)</sup>. In den nachfolgenden Sequenzen ändert sich daran zunächst nichts Grundsätzliches. Die Jünger verharren auch weiterhin in elementarer Sprachlosigkeit. Sie tun, wie ihnen geheißt wird, reichen Jesus den Fisch, hören seiner Verstehen eröffnenden Auslegung der Schriften zu und lassen sich schließlich von ihm nach Bethanien, dem Ort der Himmelfahrt, führen, sagen jedoch die ganze Zeit über kein einziges Wort. Ihre Sprachlosigkeit löst sich erst während der letzten Phase seines ἔξοδος<sup>(24)</sup>, als der Auferstandene, die Jünger segnend, in den Himmel emporgehoben wird. Was die Selbstexplikation Jesu nur partiell erreicht, das kommt in dem Augenblick zum Ziel, als er sich den Jüngern gänzlich entzieht: die

<sup>(19)</sup> S. auch J. NOLLAND, *Luke* (WBC 35A-C; Dallas, TX 1989-1993) 1213, zu διαλογισμοί (24,38); der Begriff knüpft sachlich an vv. 11,25 an. Zum christologischen Nichtverstehen vgl. ferner Lk 2,48,50; 9,36,45; 18,34; 24,45.

<sup>(20)</sup> Vgl. THEISSEN, *Wundergeschichten*, 103 mit A49. Die Wendung ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός spricht also die "Identität des Gekreuzigten mit dem Auferweckten ... ausdrücklich aus" (WIEFEL, *Evangelium*, 416).

<sup>(21)</sup> Vgl. das doppelte ἴδετε ... ὅτι in v. 39.

<sup>(22)</sup> Will man die Freude hier nicht quellenkritisch erklären — so etwa FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 1576, und NOLLAND, *Luke*, 1214 — wird man die gesamte Jüngerreaktion in v. 41: ἀπιστούντων αὐτῶν ἀπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς καὶ θαυμαζόντων, am besten als Zwischenglied zwischen der Furcht des Anfangs (vv. 37-38) und der χαρὰ μεγάλη des Endes (v. 52) deuten. ἀπιστέω weist zurück auf die "aufsteigenden Zweifel" in v. 38, θαυμάζω dürfte hier wie bei Lk auch sonst verschiedentlich eine abgeschwächte Form der Furcht sein, während die den Glauben verhindernde Freude auf v. 52 vorausweist.

<sup>(23)</sup> In Lk 24,38 wird der Gedanke des Unglaubens durch die aufsteigenden διαλογισμοί vertreten; er steht parallel zu ταράσσω und dürfte als Folge des Erschreckens zu verstehen sein.

<sup>(24)</sup> Vgl. 24,50: ἐξήγαγεν ... αὐτοὺς (ἔξω).

vollständige und umfassende Erkenntnis seiner Person und damit die Transformation ihres Unglaubens in Glauben. Die Erkenntnis, die das Schweigen des Erschreckens und Nichtverstehens bricht, manifestiert sich zunächst in der Anbetung (προσκυνέω) des in seine himmlische Doxa auffahrenden Christus (v. 52), sodann in einer großen Freude, die sich im Lobpreis Gottes im Tempel Ausdruck verschafft (v. 53). Die Anbetung Jesu und der Lobpreis Gottes fallen so am Ende des Weges Jesu zusammen.

In Lk 24 werden so, was die Reaktion der Jünger auf die Offenbarung der göttlichen Doxa in der Geschichte Jesu betrifft, die verschiedenen für Lk 2 und 9 identifizierten Reaktionsweisen aufgenommen und verdichtet. Ähnlich wie in Lk 9 ist die erste Reaktion auf die Begegnung mit dem in seine Doxa eingegangenen Christus Furcht, Unverständnis und Schweigen, und Lk 2 vergleichbar verwandelt sich auch hier erst nach der Rückkehr der Doxa an ihren himmlischen Ort Furcht in Freude, die im Lobpreis Gottes kulminiert. Entzündet sich die Furcht in Lk 2 ausschließlich an der göttlichen Doxa, so schließt sie in der Verklärungsgeschichte, ausgehend vom Kommen Gottes in der Wolke, auch die Doxa Jesu ein; in Lk 24 dann ist es allein die Erscheinung des Auferstandenen in seiner Doxa, die Furcht hervorruft<sup>(25)</sup>.

## II. Das Furchtmotiv im Kontext der Machttaten Jesu

Bei der zweiten Textgruppe, in der im Lk-Evangelium das Furchtmotiv begegnet, handelt es sich um die der Gattung der epideixis zugehörigen Machttaten Jesu in Lk 4–9<sup>(26)</sup>. Mit zwei Ausnahmen sind

<sup>(25)</sup> Die genannten Übereinstimmungen zwischen Lk 2 und 9 einerseits und Lk 24 andererseits unterstützen den Gedanken nachdrücklich, dass es sich bei den Reaktionen auf den Auferstandenen spezifischer um Reaktionen auf den mit der Auferstehung in seine Doxa eingegangenen Christus handelt.

<sup>(26)</sup> Eine Epideixis liegt vor, wenn "ein Geschehen so berichtet wird, daß am Ende die (Augen- oder Ohren-) Zeugen darauf mit Verwunderung, Staunen oder Fragen reagieren" (K. BERGER, *Formen und Gattungen im Neuen Testament* (Tübingen – Basel 2005) 367) bzw. mit Furcht (s. 368). Sprachlich wird die Reaktion entweder als Frage: "Wer ist dieser ...?" oder als Akklamation: "Du bist + Titel" zum Ausdruck gebracht (s. 367; zur Akklamation vgl. s. 290-292). Der Autor gibt m.a.W. "zwei Betrachtungsweisen wieder: die seine als die 'objektive' des Geschehens und die 'subjektive' der Rezeption des Geschehenen durch die damaligen Zeugen". Diese sollen die Reaktion der Leser "im voraus abbilden" und diese "dazu einladen, sich zu identifizieren" bzw. sich abzugrenzen (s. 367); s. ähnlich THEISSEN, *Wundergeschichten*, 168. BERGER, *Formen*, 368,

diese Erzählungen Bearbeitungen mk Vorlagen, die freilich von Lk im Blick auf die hier interessierende Frage teilweise deutlich profiliert werden.

Die Furcht der Menschen entzündet sich in den hier relevanten Texten an der Macht Jesu über widergöttliche Größen und Mächte: über die Krankheit verursachende Sünde, über den Tod, über Dämonen, über Naturgewalten und Naturgesetzlichkeiten. Gemeinsam ist diesen Erzählungen die Abfolge von Machttat Jesu, Furcht der Menschen und christologischer Akklamation. Im Folgenden ist anhand einiger exemplarisch ausgewählter Wundergeschichten aufzuzeigen, wie sich christologische Vorstellungen mit dem Furchtmotiv verbinden.

#### 1. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Vollmacht zur Sündenvergebung (Lk 5,17-26)*

Die Vollmacht Jesu über die Sünde ist das Thema der von Mk übernommenen Erzählung von der Heilung des Gelähmten in Lk 5,17-26. Die Heilung des Kranken erfolgt durch das lösende Wort von der Vergebung der Sünden (v. 20). Dieses Wort stößt auf den entschiedenen Widerspruch der Pharisäer und Schriftgelehrten: „Wer ist dieser?“, fragen sie, „der (solche) Lästerungen redet? Wer kann Sünden vergeben außer Gott allein?“ (v. 21)<sup>(27)</sup>. Für die Lehrer Israels ist Sündenvergebung eine Prärogative Gottes, die sich kein Mensch anmaßen kann. Die Erzählung zielt demgegenüber darauf, Jesus in dieser Hinsicht dem alleinigen Gott gleichzustellen: der Menschensohn hat auf Erden die Macht, Sünden zu vergeben, so wie Gott sie im Himmel hat.

Die Erzählung mündet in die Schilderung der Reaktion der Anwesenden. Der Geheilte preist Gott. Die übrigen aber werden von Furcht erfasst, die sich dann jedoch ebenfalls in Lobpreis verwandelt. Lk orientiert sich dabei formal und inhaltlich an der mk Vorlage, baut diese aber zu einem Parallelismus aus und verdoppelt so das Motiv der Furcht. Der Schlusssatz der Erzählung lautet bei ihm: „Und Entsetzen

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zufolge liegt die Vorgeschichte der Epideixis in der Darstellung von Epiphanien und Theophanien, wo Staunen und Furcht ähnlich wie in der Epideixis die üblichen Reaktionen sind. Dieser Zusammenhang ist insbesondere bei Lk augenfällig und erweist sich im hiesigen Kontext als heuristische Kategorie erster Güte. Demgegenüber verdeckt die Einteilung der Wunder bei THEISSEN, *Wundergeschichten*, 318-319 u.ö., diesen Zusammenhang.

<sup>(27)</sup> *μόνος* ist Lk Redaktion. Das Wort ersetzt *εἰ μὴ εἰς ὁ θεός* in Mk 2,7.



(ἔκστασις) ergriff alle und sie lobten Gott (ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν) und sie wurden von Furcht erfüllt (ἐπλήσθησαν) und sagten: ‘Wir haben heute unerwartete Dinge gesehen (εἶδομεν παράδοξα σήμερον; v. 26)’”. παράδοξα und σήμερον sind lukanische Ergänzung.

Entsetzen und Furcht entstehen hier angesichts eines gänzlich neuen und unerwarteten Kapitels in der Geschichte Gottes mit seinem Volk, nämlich der Manifestation der Macht Gottes in der Person des Menschensohnes Jesus. Dieser heilt jetzt, im eschatologischen Heute, mit göttlicher Dynamis (v. 17) und vergibt in gottgleicher Vollmacht Sünden. Mit Furcht und Lobpreis wird die Anerkennung des geschauten Geschehens durch die Menge zum Ausdruck gebracht. Dabei weist der Chorschluss zugleich über die Erzählung selbst hinaus, indem er verschiedene Motive aus der Geburtsgeschichte aufnimmt: Neben den Reaktionen der Furcht und des Lobpreises Gottes sind hier das Heute der Offenbarung der eschatologischen Gottesmacht und das Sehen der Offenbarungszeugen zu nennen. So wird über das Motiv der Furcht hinaus der Zusammenhang zwischen den erörterten christologischen Schlüsseltexten und den hier untersuchten Epideixeis untermauert.

## 2. *Furcht als Reaktion auf eine Totenaufweckung Jesu (Lk 7,11-17)*

Die Macht Jesu über den Tod wird in der Sondergut-Erzählung von der Auferweckung des Jünglings von Nain (Lk 7,11-17) illustriert. Die Menge reagiert auch auf diese Machttat Jesu mit Furcht und Lobpreis: “Furcht (φόβος) aber ergriff alle und sie lobten Gott und sprachen: ein großer Prophet (προφήτης) ist unter uns aufgetreten, und Gott hat sein Volk heimgesucht (ἐπεσκέψατο; v. 16)”. Die Furcht der Menge gründet in der Größe der Tat, die sie erkennen und anerkennen lässt, dass im Handeln Jesu Gott selbst wirksam ist. Deshalb gilt die Akklamation ähnlich wie in Lk 5 beiden, dem Wundertäter und durch ihn hindurch zugleich Gott selbst. Der Titel des Propheten beschreibt Jesus aus der Sicht des Lk nur unzureichend<sup>(28)</sup>. Der Wortlaut der Akklamation stellt den Prophetentitel jedoch im Kontext des Lk-Evangeliums in einen

<sup>(28)</sup> Eine vergleichbare Relativierung des Prophetentitels für Jesus zeigt sich im Kontext des Petrusbekenntnisses Lk 9,18-20; s. ferner Lk 24,19.25-27 sowie das zu Lk 9,28-36 Gesagte. Vgl. aber Lk 13,33. Unter den dem Volk geläufigen titularen Bezeichnungen jedoch umschreibt der Prophetentitel den Wundertäter am treffendsten: Wer Tote auferweckt, ist in der Tradition der Propheten Elija und Elisa ein Prophet; vgl. 1 Kön 17,17-24; 2 Kön 4,18-37. Erstere Totenerweckung schließt wie Lk 7,11-17 mit einer Akklamation, die aber nur der Person des Propheten gilt, nicht Gott.

explizit christologischen Horizont<sup>(29)</sup>. Das Adjektiv μέγας begegnet bei Lk nur noch ein weiteres Mal mit Bezug auf Jesus, und zwar im Wort des Verkündigungsengels. Dort wird die Aussage: "dieser wird groß sein", durch den Satz: "und er wird Sohn des Höchsten genannt werden" (1,32), präzisiert. Durch die Verbindung mit dem Gedanken der gnädigen Heimsuchung des Volkes durch Gott wird der Prophetentitel außerdem messianisch qualifiziert. Die gnädige Heimsuchung Israels verbindet sich vom Benedictus her mit dem "Knecht aus dem Haus Davids", den Gott als "Horn der Rettung" auftreten lässt (1,68-69)<sup>(30)</sup>. Die durch die Totenerweckung hervorgerufene Furcht gilt damit im Propheten zugleich dem Sohn Gottes und messianischen Retter.

### 3. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Dämonenheilungen Jesu*

Die furchterregende Macht Jesu soll schließlich an seinem Sieg über die Dämonen als den Repräsentanten der widergöttlichen Mächte illustriert werden. Die Lk Dämonenaustreibungen (Lk 4,31-37; 8,26-39; 9,37-43) sind sämtlich Mk Ursprungs, werden von Lk jedoch um der Profilierung der christologischen Aussage willen teilweise in erheblichem Umfang bearbeitet und noch konsequenter als bei Mk mit der Gottessohnschaft Jesu verbunden. Wie bei Mk erkennen die Dämonen zwar auch bei Lk in Jesus den "Heiligen Gottes" (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ; 4,34) bzw. den Sohn Gottes, des Höchsten" (υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ ὑψίστου; 8,28). Beide Titel führen im dritten Evangelium jedoch zu den Worten des Verkündigungsengels an Maria zurück. Als "Heiliger" wird Jesus zudem in dem ersten expliziten Schriftzitat im Lk-Evangelium identifiziert (2,23 / Ex 13,2.12.15). Damit werden beide Titel, Heiliger Gottes und Sohn Gottes, Teil einer spezifischen Linie der lukanischen Christologie<sup>(31)</sup>. Die dritte Dämonenheilung

<sup>(29)</sup> Dies wird durch die unmittelbar an Lk 7,11-17 angeschlossene, für die Messianität Jesu transparente Täuferanfrage verstärkt; vgl. dazu bes. Lk 7,21-22 mit 4,18.

<sup>(30)</sup> Die terminologischen Übereinstimmungen zwischen Lk 7,16 und 1,68-69 beziehen sich nicht nur auf ἐπισκέπτομαι (s. auch 1,78), sondern auch auf den Begriff, der in beiden Zusammenhängen das Auftreten Jesu bezeichnet. Der Zusammenhang zwischen Lk 7,11-17 und dem Benedictus ist darüber hinaus über den Begriff des Erbarmens (σπλαγχνίζομαι usw.) sichergestellt; vgl. 7,13 (bezogen auf Jesus) mit 1,78 (bezogen auf Gott).

<sup>(31)</sup> Zur vermutlich lukanischen Herkunft von Lk 1,26-28 vgl. die Argumentation von FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 336-337. Zu ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ (4,34) vgl. Lk 1,35, zu υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ ὑψίστου (8,28) Lk 1,32.35; s. ferner die Herabkunft des Heiligen

wird von Lk zudem direkt mit der Verklärungsgeschichte verbunden und wird so zur Illustration der dort proklamierten Gottessohnschaft Jesu.

Die erste und unmittelbare Reaktion der Menschen auf die gewaltig-machtvolle Manifestation Gottes in den Dämonenheilungen Jesu, des Sohnes Gottes, ist Furcht. Besonders eindrücklich wird davon in der Geschichte von der Heilung des besessenen Geraseners (Lk 8,26-39) erzählt, auf die sich die folgenden Bemerkungen darum konzentrieren. Obgleich die Geschichte sich eng an die mk Vorlage anlehnt, begegnet gerade in den hier interessierenden Fragen die Handschrift des Lk.

Von einer panikartigen Furcht angesichts des Verlusts ihrer Herde erfasst, fliehen die Schweinehirten vom Ort des Geschehens und berichten in der ganzen Umgegend von dem, was sie gesehen haben. Begleitet von der Volksmenge kehren sie dann zu Jesus und dem Geheilten zurück. Der Anblick des Mannes, der, bekleidet und vernünftig geworden, Jesus zu Füßen sitzt, erfüllt die Menge mit Furcht (ἐφοβήθησαν; v. 35). Zusätzliche Furcht aber löst bei ihnen der Bericht der Hirten über die Rettung (ἔσωθη; v. 36) des Besessenen aus: Große Furcht (φόβος μέγας) ergreift die "ganze Menge aus der Gegend der Gerasener", so dass sie Jesus bitten, von ihnen wegzugehen (v. 37).

Lk Handschrift zeigt sich hier in der Intensivierung der durch die Machttat Jesu ausgelösten Furcht, in der umfassenden Erweiterung des Kreises derer, die Jesus zum Weggehen auffordern, sowie in der Deutung der Dämonenheilung als Rettung. Im weiteren Kontext des dritten Evangeliums ist die Heilung des Besessenen dadurch als weitere Aktualisierung des Retter-Seins Jesu, wie es in Lk 2,11 programmatisch angekündigt wird, kenntlich gemacht. Auf einen von Lk intendierten Zusammenhang zwischen beiden Erzählungen weist zudem die Gestalt der Hirten, die als direkte Zeugen der Offenbarung hier wie dort das gesehene Geschehen weitererzählen<sup>(32)</sup>.

Die Bitte der von der Machttat Jesu in Angst und Schrecken versetzten Menge, Jesus möge ihr Gebiet verlassen, ist mk Ursprungs (Mk 5,17). Gleichwohl transportiert sie ein genuin lk Anliegen. Dies wird erkennbar durch eine Entsprechung mit der Erzählung vom

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Geistes auf Jesus bei der Taufe (3,22). Trotz der Selbigkeit der Formulierung weist der Ausdruck Sohn Gottes im Mund des Dämonen in Mk 1,24 im redaktionellen Zusammenhang des Mk demgegenüber in den Kontext des Messiasgeheimnisses.

<sup>(32)</sup> Vgl. Lk 8,34-36 mit Lk 2,15.

Fischzug des Petrus in Lk 5,1-11, die die Göttlichkeit Jesu an seiner Macht über Naturgesetzmäßigkeiten demonstriert: auch Petrus bittet Jesus, von ihm wegzugehen. Begründet wird dies mit dem Entsetzen (θόμβος; v. 9), das ihn und alle anderen angesichts des gänzlich unerwarteten, gewaltigen Fischfangs erfasst. Die durch das Entsetzen hervorgerufene Einsicht in den fundamentalen Unterschied zwischen der Heiligkeit Jesu, hinter der die Heiligkeit Gottes aufleuchtet<sup>(33)</sup>, und der menschlichen Sünde übersetzt sich so in die Bitte um räumliche Distanzierung. Indem diese Bitte nicht nur von den heidnischen Gerasenern, sondern auch von Petrus geäußert wird, wird sie zur Bitte nicht nur der Fernstehenden, sondern auch der engsten Begleiter Jesu.

Lk Redaktion zeigt sich schließlich am Ende der Geschichte von der Heilung des besessenen Geraseners in der bereits mehrfach beobachteten Parallelisierung von Gott und Jesus. Der Geheilte erhält von Jesus den Auftrag zu erzählen, "was Gott ihm getan hat". Der Mann aber verkündet, "was Jesus ihm getan hat" (8,39). Im Tun Jesu sieht er die Macht Gottes am Werk.

In diesem Gedanken kulminiert auch die dritte, unmittelbar auf die Verklärung folgende Erzählung von einer Dämonenheilung (9,37-43). Diese schließt mit der Aussage: "alle aber gerieten außer sich über die Majestät Gottes (ἐξεπλήσσοντο δὲ πάντες ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι τοῦ θεοῦ; 9,43)". Der Schlusssatz dieser letzten Dämonenheilung fasst damit die im Vorangehenden herangezogenen Lk Texte präzise zusammen: In den Machttaten Jesu wird die unfassbare Hoheit Gottes, zu der auch seine Heiligkeit gehört, manifest. Deshalb ist die erste Reaktion der Augenzeugen stets die Furcht. Die Konstante dieser Texte ist also nicht die Freude über die Rettung, sondern das Entsetzen angesichts der Manifestation Gottes in den Taten Jesu<sup>(34)</sup>, das sich in Lobpreis und Anerkenntnis verwandeln kann, aber nicht muss.

Die direkte Anbindung der Erzählung von der Heilung des besessenen Knaben an die Verklärungsgeschichte und ihre Umgestaltung von einer auf die Glaubenthematik zentrierten Wundererzählung zu einer Epideixis erhellen einen für das Verständnis der Lk Furcht-Geschichten wichtigen Zusammenhang. Die furchterregenden Machttaten Jesu sind die sichtbare Seite seiner unsichtbaren

<sup>(33)</sup> Vgl. Ex 3,5-6 und Jes 6 und dazu u.a. FITZMYER, *Gospel*, 567.

<sup>(34)</sup> Die Parallelisierung von Gottes- und Sohneshandeln in einigen der erörterten Wunder findet sich für die nachösterliche Situation in einem Gebet der Jünger in Apg 4,30 und verbindet sich mit dem auch in den Machttaten Jesu in Lk 4-9 verschiedentlich aufleuchtenden Gedanken der Heiligkeit Jesu.

himmlischen Doxa. Diese versetzt die Menschen, die ihr begegnen, nicht minder in Schrecken als die himmlische Doxa selbst. Die furchterregende Doxa Gottes, die in der Wolke auf dem Berg der Verklärung verborgen ist und sich auf dem Angesicht des verklärten Gottessohnes widerspiegelt, manifestiert sich irdisch in einer Dämonenheilung, die das Entsetzen der Menge angesichts der in Jesus manifest werdenden Majestät Gottes hervorruft. Durch den Rückverweis verschiedener Motive der erörterten Wundergeschichten in Lk 4–9 auf die Geburtsgeschichte werden die Machttaten Jesu als bereits in der dort geschilderten Doxa-Offenbarung angelegt erwiesen.

### III. Das Buch Exodus als Voraussetzung der 1k Entfaltung des Furchtmotivs

Die 1k Entfaltung des Motivs der Furcht als Reaktion des Menschen auf die Offenbarung Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu nimmt auf vielfältige Weise auf atl. Texte Bezug; eine besondere Nähe zeigt sich jedoch zur Darstellung des Offenbarungsgeschehens in Ex<sup>(35)</sup>. Insbesondere der für Lk charakteristische Zusammenhang von Furcht und Doxa einerseits und Furcht und Wunder andererseits findet im Alten Testament nur hier eine genaue Entsprechung. Im Folgenden werden daher die für diesen Zusammenhang grundlegenden Abschnitte aus Ex mit Blick auf die 1k Entfaltung des Furchtmotivs ins Auge gefasst.

<sup>(35)</sup> In der Literatur wird hierfür meist auf andere atl. Zusammenhänge verwiesen, die m.E. jedoch dem 1k Befund ferner stehen als Ex. So werden an atl. Parallelen immer wieder die Wundertaten der Propheten Elija und Elisa genannt, die in den beiden Wunderzyklen 1 Kön 17 und 2 Kön 2–6 überliefert sind. Diesen Wundergeschichten fehlt aber durchweg das im hiesigen Kontext entscheidende Kriterium der Furcht als Element der Reaktion der Augenzeugen auf das Wunder. Die bei Lk vielfach mit dem Wunder verbundene Akklamation findet sich in den Elija und Elisa zugeschriebenen Wundern nur selten; vgl. 1 Kön 17,24; 18,39 und 2 Kön 5,15. Umgekehrt verhält es sich bei Dan. Hier findet sich zwar wiederholt das Furchtmotiv in Verbindung mit Engeloffenbarungen und eine Lk vergleichbare Vielfalt der Furcht-Terminologie. Allerdings ist hier der Kontext ein anderer. Die Furcht hervorrufenden Engeloffenbarungen sind bei Dan Einleitungen und Kommentare zu Visionen und ihrer Deutung; vgl. Dan 7,15.28; 8,17; 10,7.11. Die Verbindung von Wunder und Furcht fehlt, von Dan 3,24Θ abgesehen, ganz. Für die Geschichte von der Berufung des Petrus wird verschiedentlich auf Jes 6 verwiesen. Die Sachparallele besteht in der Erkenntnis der Sündhaftigkeit des Menschen, dem eine Offenbarung widerfährt. Im Unterschied zu Lk 5,9 begegnet der Begriff der Furcht in Jes 6 jedoch nicht, obwohl die Furcht der Sache nach vorauszusetzen ist.

# 1. *Furcht als Reaktion auf die Herrlichkeitsoffenbarungen Gottes im Buch Exodus*

Bezogen auf die Verklärungsgeschichte besteht ein weitgehender Konsens darüber, dass Lk motivisch auf die Sinai-Erzählung Bezug nimmt; die folgenden Überlegungen knüpfen insoweit an bereits Bekanntes an. Besondere Bedeutung kommt hier dem Abschnitt Ex 24,15-18 zu. Mit diesem Text ist Lk 9 v.a. über die Vorstellung der auf dem Berg erscheinenden Wolke Gottes sowie über das Motiv der Doxa verbunden, indirekt auch über das Motiv der Furcht<sup>(36)</sup>. δόξα ist das griechische Äquivalent zu כבוד, dessen alttestamentliche Bedeutungsaspekte auf δόξα übergegangen sind<sup>(37)</sup>. Ex 24 hat im weiteren Kontext des Buches u.a. die Funktion, die bis Kapitel 20 dominierende Vorstellung der Offenbarung Gottes im Feuer mit dem in der Wolke erscheinenden כבוד Gottes zu identifizieren<sup>(38)</sup>. Es heißt dazu in 24,17: „Und die Erscheinung des כבוד JHWH's war wie verzehrendes Feuer auf dem Gipfel des Berges vor den Augen der Israeliten“. Bei den vorausgehenden Offenbarungen Gottes im Feuer, der Dornbuschoffenbarung Ex 3 sowie der Sinaioffenbarung Ex 19-20, ist die Gottesoffenbarung jeweils direkt mit dem Furchtmotiv verbunden.

In der die Furcht intensivierenden Version der Septuaginta heißt es in Ex 3,6: „Mose aber wandte sein Gesicht ab, denn er fürchtete sich, vor Gott hinabzuschauen“<sup>(39)</sup>. Der Grund seiner Furcht ist die Erscheinung des Engels Gottes in einer Feuerflamme verbunden mit dem Ergehen des göttlichen Wortes. Der sich im Dornbusch als Gott der Väter offenbarende Gott qualifiziert den Ort des Geschehens als heiliges Land und gibt sich damit selbst als heilig kund. Die lodernde

(36) B. JANOWSKI, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen*. Traditions- und religionsgeschichtliche Studien zur Sühnetheologie der Priesterschrift (WMANT 55; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2000) 312, spricht für Ex 24,17 von der „geschützte(n) Distanz“, von der aus die Israeliten der „feuerähnlichen *maiestas Dei* ansichtig werden“. In Ex 20,18 wird dies „Stehen aus der Ferne“ (וַיַּעֲמֵד מֵרָחוֹק / ἑσθῆσαν μακρόθεν) ausdrücklich als Folge der Furcht der Israeliten beschrieben; s. auch Ex 20,21.

(37) Vgl. H. HEGERMANN, „δόξα, ης, ἡ *doxa* Ansehen, Ehre, Machtglanz, Herrlichkeit“, *EWNT* (1992) I, 834.

(38) Vgl. u.a. C. WESTERMANN, „כבד *kbd* schwer sein“, *THAT* I, 809, und F. STOLZ, „שׂ *'es* Feuer“, *THAT* I, 245.

(39) εὐλαβεῖτο γὰρ καταβλέψαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. Bei καταβλέπω handelt es sich um einen Neologismus, der „to look down (before God)“ bedeutet. Vgl. J. LUST – E. EYNIKEL – K. HAUSPIE, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Stuttgart 1992-1996) II, 248. Das Wort stelle eine „theological interpretation avoiding Hebr. הָבִים ‘to look in the face of’“ dar.

Feuerflamme wird zudem von einem wunderhaften Phänomen begleitet: Der brennende Dornbusch wird vom Feuer nicht verzehrt. Das Wunder ist Teil des Schreckens des sich im Feuer offenbarenden Gottes. Mit Blick auf Lk ist dieser Abschnitt nicht nur für den Zusammenhang von Furcht und Doxa relevant, sondern auch für das Verständnis der Berufung des Petrus in Lk 5,4-11. Im Horizont von Ex 3 erweist sich die Furcht des Petrus als Erschrecken angesichts der im Wunder des Fischzugs aufleuchtenden Heiligkeit Gottes, die hier freilich in der Person Jesu erfahrbar wird.

In besonderer Verdichtung zeigt sich der Zusammenhang von Doxa und Furcht in den Abschnitten, die der Offenbarung der 10 Gebote in Ex 20 vorausgehen bzw. unmittelbar auf sie folgen<sup>(40)</sup>. In Ex 19,16-19 sind es zunächst die Vorboten der Offenbarung Gottes im Feuer, die bei den Israeliten Furcht hervorrufen: Angesichts des Aufruhrs der Elemente, des Donnerns und Blitzens, der Erscheinung der schweren Wolke auf dem Berg und dem Ertönen einer gewaltigen Trompetenstimme "erschrak (ἐπτοήθη) das ganze Volk im Lager" (v. 16). Für Mose ist dies das Signal, das Volk aus dem Lager heraus- und der Gottesbegegnung entgegenzuführen. Abweichend vom masoretischen Text flicht die Septuaginta hier erneut das Motiv der Furcht ein und verbindet es direkt mit der Offenbarung Gottes im Feuer: "Der Berg Sinai aber war ganz in Rauch gehüllt, weil Gott im Feuer auf ihn herabgestiegen war... Und das ganze Volk entsetzte sich sehr (ἐξέστη ... σφόδρα; v. 18)"<sup>(41)</sup>. In Ex 20,18-21 wird das Motiv der Furcht des Volkes angesichts des Aufruhrs der Elemente erneut aufgenommen, erhält hier aber eine zusätzliche Dimension. Durch die machtvolle Offenbarung Gottes von der Furcht um das eigene Leben getrieben, flieht das Volk vom Fuß des Berges: "Das ganze Volk aber fürchtete sich (φοβηθέντες) und blieb von Ferne stehen (v. 18)"<sup>(42)</sup>; so in der Version der Septuaginta.

<sup>(40)</sup> Dass Ex 19,16-19 und Ex 20,18-21 aufs engste aufeinander bezogen sind, ist unstrittig. Zu den hier sich stellenden literarkritischen Fragen vgl. bes. E. BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin 1990) 49-50, 95-97, und B. JACOB, *Das Buch Exodus* (Stuttgart 1997) 585.

<sup>(41)</sup> MT liest stattdessen: וַיִּחַדּוּ כָּל-הָעָם בָּאָזָא. Ein weiteres Beispiel dafür, dass die LXX das Furchtmotiv im Offenbarungskontext im Verhältnis zum MT verstärkt, ist Lev 9,24. Die LXX liest hier statt וַיִּרְאוּ ("und sie jubelten") καὶ ἐξέστησαν ("und es (sc. das Volk) entsetzte sich").

<sup>(42)</sup> Die LXX versteht וַיִּרְאוּ von וָיָא (fürchten) her, während der MT רָאָה (sehen) voraussetzt. Eine weitere Veränderung gegenüber dem MT ist das Fehlen des zweiten Satzgliedes וַיִּנָּסוּ in Ex 20,18LXX, wo es ausweislich der Wendung

Die Entfaltung des Furchtmotivs in der Darstellung der Sinai-Offenbarung weist auch über die Verbindung von Doxa-Offenbarung und Furcht des Volkes hinaus Übereinstimmungen mit den Lk Offenbarungstexten auf. Dies betrifft zum einen die Begrifflichkeit, die hier wie dort zur Umschreibung der Furcht gebraucht wird. Neben den geläufigen, in verschiedenen Lk Texten begegnenden Begriffen φοβέομαι und ἐξίστημι gilt dies insbesondere für das seltene Verb πτοέω das sowohl in Ex 19 als auch in Lk 24 begegnet<sup>(43)</sup>.

Zum anderen betreffen die Übereinstimmungen die inhaltliche Ausgestaltung des Furchtmotivs. In Ex wie in Lk gehört es zur Reaktion der Offenbarungszeugen, Distanz zum Offenbarer zu schaffen. Bei Petrus führt die "Furcht angesichts des wunderbaren Fischfangs zu der Bitte, Jesus möge von ihm weggehen. Ebenso reagiert die Menge der Gerasener auf die Heilung des Besessenen. Ihre Reaktion ist freilich nur die abgeschattete Gestalt der Furcht" der Hirten als der unmittelbaren Augenzeugen des Wunders, die vom Ort des Geschehens fliehen. Dies erinnert an Ex 20,18-19, wo die Israeliten aus Furcht vom Berg der Offenbarung fliehen und Mose bitten, fortan möge er und nicht mehr Gott selbst mit ihnen reden. Während sich die Suche nach Distanz zum Offenbarer in Ex mit der Doxa-Offenbarung Gottes verbindet, findet sie sich bei Lk freilich im Kontext der Machterweise Jesu.

## 2. Furcht als Reaktion auf Rettungswunder im Buch Exodus

Auch für den Zusammenhang von Furcht und Wunder sind auffallende Übereinstimmungen zwischen Lk und Ex zu konsta-

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ἐσθησαν μακρόθεν (20,18) in der Sache aber vorausgesetzt ist. JACOB, *Buch Exodus*, 585, paraphrasiert das zitierte Verb sachgemäß mit "(s)ie schwankten zitternd zurück", darin die von W. GESENIUS – F. BUHL, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (1915, Nachdr. Berlin u.a.1962) 493, s.v. פחד 1, aufgeführten Aspekte verbindet; vgl. auch die Paraphrase von U. CASSUTO, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (Jerusalem 1951, Nachdr. 1983) 253: "they retreated in panic on account of their terror". Zum Zusammenhang von Offenbarungsfurcht und Flucht vgl. neben Ex 20,19 (in Verbindung mit Ex 20,21) Dan 10,7, Artapanus F3, 27,21 und 3Bar 7,5.

<sup>(43)</sup> Im AT findet sich πτοέω wiederholt. Aber außer in Ex 19,16 wird Gott im gesamten AT nur noch in Hi 23,15 als Gegenstand der durch πτοέω ausgedrückten Furcht genannt. Anders als in Ex 19,16 liegt in Hi 23,15 jedoch kein Offenbarungszusammenhang vor. Im NT ist der einzige Beleg neben Lk 24,37 die Stelle Lk 21,9; die Furcht ist hier allerdings auf apokalyptische Ereignisse bezogen. Als menschliche Reaktion auf die göttliche Offenbarung findet sich das Verb somit im gesamten AT und NT ausschließlich in der Sinaiperikope und der Erzählung von der Begegnung des Auferstandenen mit seinen Jüngern.



tieren<sup>(44)</sup>. Sie betreffen sowohl das Grundsätzliche als auch Einzelaspekte. Was das Grundsätzliche anbelangt, so sind, ähnlich wie für Lk 4-9 gesehen, auch in Ex die Machttaten Gottes zum Heil Israels als der soteriologische Ausdruck seiner unsichtbaren Doxa verstanden. Ausdrücklich werden das Schilfmeer-Wunder und die Gabe des Manna in diesem Horizont gedeutet. So erscheint die wunderbare Rettung Israels am Schilfmeer als die soteriologische Seite des göttlichen Herrlichkeitserweises an Pharao<sup>(45)</sup>. Und in Ex 16,6-7 wird das am Morgen vom Himmel fallende Manna ausdrücklich als die soteriologische Gestalt der Herrlichkeit Gottes gedeutet (ὄψεσθε τὴν δόξαν κυρίου; v. 7). Im unmittelbaren Anschluss daran berichtet der Erzähler von der Erscheinung der göttlichen Herrlichkeit in der Wolke (καὶ ἡ δόξα κυρίου ὤφθη ἐν νεφέλῃ; v. 10). Damit werden in Ex 16 in nächster Nähe beide Gestalten der δόξα bzw. des כבוד mit ein und demselben Begriff bezeichnet. Dies ist ein innerhalb von Ex singuläres Phänomen, das sich so auch bei Lk nicht findet. Mit der Verbindung von Doxa-Erscheinung in der Wolke und soteriologischer Machttat in Gestalt der Dämonenheilung kommt der Zusammenhang Lk 9,28-36.37-43 dem Befund von Ex 16 aber nahe<sup>(46)</sup>.

Wiederum Lk vergleichbar, zielt die soteriologische Gestalt des Doxa-Erweises in Ex auf die Anerkenntnis der Gottheit Gottes<sup>(47)</sup>. Und wie bei Lk ist auch in Ex die Furchtreaktion des Volkes das Bindeglied zwischen Wunder und lobpreisender Anerkenntnis Gottes. Die

<sup>(44)</sup> Beide Aspekte sind auch in der Mose-Paraphrase des Artapanus verbunden; vgl. F3 27,21-26. Bei Artapanus findet sich der Begriff der δόξα allerdings nicht, sondern wie in dem Text Ex 3,1-6, auf den er sich bezieht, der des Feuers.

<sup>(45)</sup> Vgl. Ex 14,4.17-18. JHWH erweist "seine Herrlichkeit erstmals im Sieg über Pharao" — T. PODELLA, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs*. Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umgebung (FAT 15; Tübingen 1996) 216. Sowie Ex 15,6-7.11LXX.

<sup>(46)</sup> Zur Lk Gestalt der beiden Doxa-Dimensionen vgl. ferner Num 20,1-6.7-13, wo unmittelbar im Anschluss an die Notiz, die Herrlichkeit Gottes sei Mose und Aaron nach ihrer Abwendung von der murrenden Gemeinde Israels erschienen, ein Wassermirakel zugunsten der Israeliten von Gott angekündigt und von Mose ins Werk gesetzt wird; s. auch Num 14,10.21-22.

<sup>(47)</sup> Zur Anerkenntnis Gottes als Funktion des Wunders im Buch Exodus vgl. Ex 4,30-31; 10,2; 11,7; 14,30-31 (Israel); 7,3-5.17; 8,11.28; 9,14.29; 14,4.17-18 (Pharao und die Ägypter); s. ferner 1 Kön 18,37-39 (Israel); 2 Kön 5,15 (der Syrer Naeman); Dan 3,28; 6,27-28 (Nebukadnezar und Darius); Jon 1,16 (die heidnischen Schiffspassagiere) und ParJer 7,18 ("das ganze Volk"). So sind die Ex-Stellen auch hier in besonderer Dichte vertreten.

Schlüsselstelle hierfür ist die Geschichte von der Rettung am Schilfmeer Ex 14.15, wo sich am Übergang der beiden Kapitel die nächste Parallele zu dem bei Lk identifizierten Grundmuster findet. In Ex 14,30-31 fasst der Erzähler das Geschehen der Nacht des Durchzugs in dem Satz zusammen: “Und der Herr rettete (ἐπρῴσατο) Israel an jenem Tag aus der Hand der Ägypter”. Daran schließt sich die Schilderung der Reaktion des Volkes an: Es sieht (εἶδεν) die Ägypter tot am Ufer des Meeres liegen und erkennt (εἶδεν) darin die “große Hand Gottes”. Diesem Sehen aber folgen Furcht und Vertrauen: “Das Volk aber fürchtete den Herrn (ἐφοβήθη) und sie vertrauten (ἐπίστευσαν) Gott und Mose, seinem Knecht”. Furcht meint hier die “anbetende Ergriffenheit vor mit Macht gepaarter Heiligkeit, die in Entfernung hält”, während sich das Vertrauen auf den “Helfer” richtet, zu dem es hinzieht<sup>(48)</sup>. In Ex 15 artikulieren sich Furcht und Vertrauen sodann im Lobpreis des majestätischen Gottes aus dem Munde der Geretteten<sup>(49)</sup>.

Über diese grundsätzlichen Übereinstimmungen hinaus lassen sich auch in Einzelaspekten Linien zwischen Ex 14–15 und den erörterten Texten aus dem Lk-Evgl ziehen. Die Schlussverse von Ex 14 nehmen auf die Ermutigungsrede Bezug, die Mose angesichts der Angst der Israeliten vor den heranziehenden Ägyptern gehalten hat. Er sagt: “Seid guten Mutes (θαρσεῖτε). Haltet stand und seht die Rettung (ὁρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν), die (Gott) uns heute (σήμερον) bereiten wird (14,13)”. Es ist das Sehen dieser Rettung, das bei den Israeliten Furcht vor Gott bewirkt, die wiederum in das Gotteslob mündet. Ähnliche Wendungen finden sich in redaktionellen Formulierungen in den Geschichten von der Heilung des Gelähmten in Lk 5 und des besessenen Geraseners in Lk 8<sup>(50)</sup>, die ihrerseits an die Geburtsgeschichte Jesu mit der Verkündigung der Geburt des Retters heute anknüpfen. Erkennendes Sehen der göttlichen Rettungstat, die in Furcht und lobpreisende Anerkennung des Offenbarer-Gottes mündet, gehören so zum gemeinsamen motivischen Grundbestand von Ex und Lk<sup>(51)</sup>.

<sup>(48)</sup> JACOB, *Das Buch Exodus*, 420.

<sup>(49)</sup> Ähnlich wie in Lk wird dies in Ex 15,1LXX, abweichend vom MT, terminologisch mit dem Begriff δοξάζω zum Ausdruck gebracht: “Singen wollen wir dem Herrn, denn herrlich soll er verherrlicht werden (ἐνδόξως γὰρ δεδόξασται)”. Zu δοξάζω im Sinne der lobpreisenden Verherrlichung Gottes bei Lk vgl. 2,20; 5,25-26; 7,16; 13,13; 17,15; 18,43; 23,47.

<sup>(50)</sup> Vgl. Lk 5,26 und 8,36-37.

<sup>(51)</sup> Bei Lk spielt das Sehen (ὁράω) sowohl im Kontext von Wundern (Lk 5,8.26; 8,34-36; s. ferner 7,22) als auch von Doxa-Offenbarungen (Lk 2,15.17.20;

Gemeinsam ist beiden ferner das Motiv der gnädigen Heimsuchung des Volkes durch Gott (ἐπισκέπτομαι). Während der Begriff in Lk 7 die Auferweckung des Jünglings von Nain interpretiert, markiert er in Ex den Anfangs- und Endpunkt der Rettung des Volkes Israel aus der ägyptischen Sklaverei. In Ex 3,16 und 4,31 bezieht sich ἐπισκέπτομαι auf die göttliche Wahrnehmung des Elends der Israeliten in Ägypten, in Ex 13,19 auf die unmittelbar bevorstehende Rettung am Schilfmeer<sup>(52)</sup>.

Die aufgezeigten Übereinstimmungen zwischen der Ausgestaltung des Furchtmotivs bei Lk und in Ex machen für diesen Motivkomplex einen bewussten Rückgriff auf Ex wahrscheinlich<sup>(53)</sup>. Zwar hat Lk das Furchtmotiv bei Mk vorgefunden, wo sich bereits eine Reihe von Elementen findet, die er für die Entfaltung des Furchtmotivs verwendet. Es ist jedoch erst Lk, der das Furchtmotiv erkennbar im Horizont des Buches Exodus interpretiert. Entscheidend hierfür ist die Verbindung des Motivs der Furcht mit der Offenbarung der göttlichen Doxa. Erst durch diese Verbindung entsteht die grundlegende Strukturanalogie zur Gottesfurcht in Ex, die sich am soteriologisch zentrierten Selbsterweis Gottes im Wunder einerseits und an seiner Offenbarung in Herrlichkeit andererseits entzündet. Dass Lk mit Ex wohl vertraut ist, wird nicht zuletzt durch den Geschichtsrückblick in

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9,32.36; 24,37.39) eine wichtige Rolle. Entsprechendes gilt für das Sehen im AT. Zum Sehen im Horizont von Wundern vgl. Ex 4,30 (MT); 14,30-31; 16,7(.32); 19,4; 34,10; Num 14,22; 1 Sam 12,16; 1 Kön 18,39 (zu den Pentateuch-Stellen s. auch BLUM, *Studien*, 104-105); zum Sehen im Kontext von Doxa- bzw. Feuer-Offenbarungen (o.ä.) s. Ex 3,2-4 (vgl. dazu BLUM, *Studien*, 11); 20,18; 24,10.17 (MT); 33,10.20.23; 34,30.35; Lev 9,24. Auch hier haben die Ex-Stellen ein besonderes Gewicht.

<sup>(52)</sup> Lk 7,16 kommt der Formulierung in Ex 4,31: ὅτι ἐπεσκέψατο ὁ θεὸς τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ, am nächsten. Sie ist Teil der Schilderung der Reaktion des Volkes auf seine von Aaron und Mose durch Worte und Zeichen (4,27-31) angekündigte göttliche Befreiung aus der ägyptischen Knechtschaft. Sachlich stimmt Ex 4,31 mit 3,16 überein, wo ἐπισκοπή ἐπέσκεμμαι ὑμῶς steht; vgl. auch Ex 13,19, wo auf Gen 50,24 Bezug genommen wird. In der Literatur wird als Parallele zu Lk 7,16 (und 1,68) verschiedentlich auf Rut 1,16 hingewiesen. Die Stelle dürfte hier allerdings nur von sekundärer Bedeutung sein, da sie nicht wie in der Ex-Tradition im Kontext des machtvollen Selbsterweises JHWHs steht. Die hier als Primärzusammenhang behauptete Verbindung zur Ex-Tradition wird durch App 7,23 bestätigt, wo Lk auf Ex 3,16; 4,31 Bezug nimmt.

<sup>(53)</sup> Diese Dimension der Lk Ex-Rezeption bleibt auch in der Spezialuntersuchung von K. SCHIFFNER, *Lukas liest Exodus*. Eine Untersuchung zur Aufnahme ersttestamentlicher Befreiungsgeschichte im lukanischen Werk als Schriftlektüre (BWANT 172; Stuttgart 2008), unberücksichtigt.

Apg 7 untermauert, in dem er auf verschiedene der im Vorangehenden erwähnten Texte und Motive Bezug nimmt<sup>(54)</sup>.

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Das Furchtmotiv qualifiziert einen Teil der Lk Wundergeschichten als offenbarungshaft und deckt damit den inneren Zusammenhang zwischen diesen Texten und den Doxa-Manifestationen in Lk 2; 9 und 24 auf. Dieser innere Zusammenhang besteht in der Offenbarung der Majestät Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu. Mit dem Satz: "alle aber gerieten außer sich über die Majestät Gottes" (9,43), wird diese spezifische Linie der Lk Christologie zusammengefasst. Das Furchtmotiv leistet somit einen entscheidenden Beitrag dazu, um die in den Machttaten Jesu offenbar werdende Majestät Gottes als die sichtbare Seite der unsichtbaren himmlischen Doxa erkennbar werden zu lassen.

Das Lk Verständnis der Offenbarung, wie es sich in der Reaktion der Augen- und Ohrenzeugen spiegelt, verdankt sich in erheblichem Maße der Theologie des Buches Exodus. Um das Geschehen der Offenbarung Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu theologisch zu entfalten, bedient sich Lk der Sprache der Offenbarung, wie er sie in Ex vorgefunden hat. Wie sich der alttestamentliche Gott in der grundlegenden Rettungsgeschichte des Volkes Israel kundgetan hat, so manifestiert er sich jetzt aufs Neue im Rettungshandeln Jesu. Hier wie dort reagieren die Menschen, die mit dem göttlichen Handeln in Berührung kommen, in entsprechender Weise. Der Rückgriff auf die Sprache der Offenbarung des Buches Exodus bleibt nicht ohne Konsequenzen für das Verständnis Jesu bei Lk. Wie der transzendente Gott seine Doxa am Sinai im Feuer und im Exodus in Zeichen und Wundern manifestiert, so zeigt sie sich jetzt in vergleichbarer Weise in der Geschichte Jesu. Damit erhält auch die Furcht, die durch die Offenbarung der Majestät Gottes hervorgerufen wird, einen neuen Bezugspunkt. Sie gilt nun Jesus, dem Offenbarer, und der in ihm wirkenden Macht und Heiligkeit Gottes.

Furcht ist für Lk ein unverzichtbarer Teil seiner Darstellung der Offenbarung der Doxa Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu. Lk kennt Jesus sicher nicht als "Jesus gentle, meek, and mild" gewisser populärer Jesus-Deutungen<sup>(55)</sup>. Jesus ist für Lk aber auch nicht allein der Retter,

<sup>(54)</sup> Vgl. Apg 7,23 mit Ex 3,16; 4,31; Apg 7,25 mit Ex 14,30; Apg 7,32 mit Ex 3,6; Apg 7,33 mit Ex 3,5.

<sup>(55)</sup> So richtig HARRINGTON, *Luke*, 41.

der sich den Menschen verkündigend, heilend und vergebend zuwendet. So sehr er für Lk dieser Retter ist, so sehr ist er es als der Heilige Gottes, dessen Macht und Herrlichkeit Furcht erregt.

Lukanische Christologie löst sich nicht in Soteriologie auf. Sofern sie Hoheitschristologie ist, ist sie es nicht zuletzt als Christologie der Doxa, die ihre spezifischen Konturen dem Verständnis der Doxa Gottes in Ex verdankt.

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#### SUMMARY

The theme of fear is to be found in the gospel of Luke not only in connection with the central revelations of glory — in the account of the birth and transfiguration as well as in the chapter on the resurrection — but also in several miracle stories. In the light of Luke 9,43 Jesus' mighty deeds, which give rise to fear in those present, appear as the visible aspect of his heavenly glory. This understanding of revelation echoes the revelation theology of the Book of Exodus which interprets the signs and wonders which Israel experiences in the context of the departure from Egypt as the soteriological aspect of God's glory revealed on Sinai. Jesus as the Holy One of God, who, like the God of Exodus, arouses revelation fear, is to be understood against this background.

## Mettre en œuvre la foi, selon l'Épître de Jacques

Étant donné que dans la pensée chrétienne l'action du Créateur peut être représentée par la puissance du Λόγος, dans l'Épître de Jacques la réflexion théologique vise à établir comment saisir cette Parole divine, puis comment s'y conformer, comment mettre le discours et le comportement humains en adéquation avec elle, pour lui correspondre, la suggérer, la transmettre ou la glorifier. La parénèse recherche aussi, à sa manière, une méthode permettant de s'accorder avec le Λόγος de Dieu et de s'en faire l'écho et l'annonciateur, en indiquant notamment la nécessité de contrôler les moyens d'expression dont disposent les humains ou les rapports qui doivent se développer entre toute confession de la foi et sa "mise en œuvre". De ces préoccupations découle, en dernier lieu, un enseignement d'ordre ecclésiologique définissant les caractéristiques du chant et des manifestations de la parole appropriées aux formes du culte et de la liturgie. La question des modalités de la célébration divine donne donc une unité à l'Épître de Jacques, car elle y est traitée tout du long sous ses divers aspects<sup>(1)</sup>.

À tous ces égards, la particularité de ce texte consiste à donner délibérément une formulation, sinon une dimension esthétique à cette problématique. En effet, dans cet écrit, les fidèles sont appelés à se faire les "poètes du Λόγος"<sup>(2)</sup>. Or, en grec, le mot ποιητής désigne un personnage composant selon les règles d'un processus d'expression littéraire inspiré. Mais, dans cette épître, ce terme est rapidement mis en relation avec un vocabulaire souvent rapporté à des réalisations très concrètes. C'est pourquoi les poètes, artistes, chantres de la Parole, ont été identifiés à des artisans, des "facteurs" accomplissant effectivement le contenu du Λόγος. Ainsi, au moment de la Réforme, notamment, la formule a été interprétée comme le nœud d'une controverse opposant le sentiment d'une gratuité totale de la foi à l'idée d'une nécessaire

(1) L. SIMON, "Pourquoi aimer l'épître de Jacques", *FV* 42 (2003) 88, a eu une bonne intuition en identifiant les "paroles" comme le sujet central de cette lettre: "Debarim, voilà en fait le mot qui résume toute l'épître". Cependant le texte est écrit en grec, non pas en hébreu, et ce fait n'est pas indifférent. Sans négliger les rapports qui s'imposent avec la pensée juive, il faudra donc tenir compte de la signification propre et des connotations particulières que prennent les expressions telles qu'elles sont formulées dans la langue du Nouveau Testament.

(2) Jc 1,22.

pratique du bien qu'elle implique<sup>(3)</sup>. Cependant, les subtilités stylistiques, quasiment "poétiques", du texte de Jacques n'établissent pas une telle dichotomie. En effet, dans sa logique, des relations s'instaurent entre l'accueil, la réception de la foi dans l'être et, d'autre part, son éclosion, son épanouissement en tant que telle, plutôt qu'entre l'expression d'une intime confession de foi et la pratique religieuse, externe, des œuvres, qui devrait en résulter. La "poésie du Λόγος" se présente alors comme une "mise en œuvre" de la foi dont les effets se manifestent dans la formation accomplie du "poète" lui-même, et se répercutent comme l'avènement induit, et non pas comme la fabrication ouvrière, d'un règne évangélique.

### I. La "mise en œuvre" du Λόγος: origine de la question

En fait, l'enseignement de Jacques répond à une problématique déjà formulée dans le Premier Testament lorsque Ézéchiél (33,31-32) souligne l'hiatus existant entre la beauté des annonces prophétiques et la superficialité de leurs auditeurs. Dieu est alors censé déplorer la solution de continuité qu'il remarque chez son peuple entre l'écoute des articles de la Loi et son obéissance<sup>(4)</sup>. Précisément, le dysfonctionnement est dénoncé comme un clivage qui s'établit entre l'émotion artistique suscitée par l'audition de la parole divine et son assimilation, son appropriation, le fait d'en assumer le sens.

Dans cette perspective, tout se passe donc comme si l'intérêt culturel, d'une certaine manière, se substituait à la fonction culturelle dévolue à l'audition de la parole divine, comme si le peuple considérait le prophète à la manière d'un "poète" dont l'art n'a pas d'autre but ou d'autre enjeu que le ravissement de l'esprit. Or, d'après le texte d'Ézéchiél, Dieu en attend un enchantement qui exercerait son influence sur le comportement et sur la vie des fidèles. Mais ce phénomène ne se produit pas et une question demeure alors en suspens:

<sup>(3)</sup> Cf. B. ROUSSEL, "Histoire de la réception de l'épître de Jacques", *FV* 42 (2003) 42-44 et T. KOT, *La Lettre de Jacques*. La foi chemin de la vie (Rhétorique sémitique II; Paris 2006) 15.

<sup>(4)</sup> Sur les implications de cette problématique dans la pensée juive, cf. M. DIBELIUS, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James* (eds. M.A. WILLIAMS – H. KOESTER) (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1976) 114 et J.-N. ALETTI, "Romains 1-3: Quelle fonction? Histoire de l'exégèse et nouveau paradigme", *Biblical Exegesis in Progress*. Old and New Testament Essays. 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, J.-N. ALETTI – J.-L. SKA (eds.) (AnBib 176; Rome 2009) 484-485.

comment faire pour que l'écoute aboutisse à une mise en pratique? Comment passer du dire prophétique à l'acte pieux qui lui correspond?

Deux auteurs du Nouveau Testament, Paul et Jacques, abordent ensuite le sujet de manière significative, avec l'intention manifeste de montrer qu'il est possible d'apporter une réponse à l'aporie signalée par Ézéchiél<sup>(5)</sup>. Dans l'Épître aux Romains, Paul privilégie la spontanéité de la nature humaine, lorsqu'elle porte l'être vers le bien, et il disqualifie la Loi, concept de référence de la théologie juive (cf. particulièrement Rm 2,13-15)<sup>(6)</sup>. Ainsi, de son point de vue, lorsque les hommes entendent la parole divine, leurs qualités intrinsèques peuvent suffire pour les conduire vers l'obéissance, sans qu'il soit nécessaire d'établir un code moral ou des règles religieuses. L'apôtre se situe alors dans les cadres de la pensée grecque, qui a toujours opposé systématiquement les deux notions νόμος (loi) et φύσις (nature) dans tous les débats philosophiques et, dans cette circonstance, il ne développe donc pas un raisonnement spécifiquement chrétien<sup>(7)</sup>.

De toute évidence, les auteurs néotestamentaires découvrent avec bonheur le parti qu'ils peuvent tirer des diverses connotations du mot ποιητής. En effet, désormais, grâce à la polysémie du vocabulaire grec, les "poètes de la Loi", c'est-à-dire, à l'origine, ceux qui la "mettent en pratique" apparaissent aussi comme ses chantres enthousiastes, mus par l'élan d'un art sublime. Paul ne s'appesantit guère sur cette idée, néanmoins il crée un réseau sémantique dans lequel les termes se rapportant à la loi naturelle l'évoquent, à travers quelques métaphores discrètes, comme une expression aux vertus inspirantes. Ainsi, au verset 15, la "démonstration" que les justes produisent de leur qualité s'effectue comme la performance d'un spectacle poétique, d'après l'emploi du verbe ἐνδείκνυνται. Quant au mot ἔργον, il devient ambivalent, désignant la loi inspirée qui les anime à la fois comme une "œuvre" littéraire et comme sa propre efficence. Toutefois, à travers l'occurrence du terme γραπτόν, l'instinct de justice est représenté comme la source d'un texte intériorisé, gravé dans le cœur des humains, creuset dans lequel fusionnent l'âme et l'esprit, tandis que les

<sup>(5)</sup> La question affleure aussi très brièvement dans Mt 7,26 et, avec un écho plus lointain, dans 1 Jn 3,18.

<sup>(6)</sup> Pour plus de précision sur cette question, cf. J.-N. ALETTI, *Israël et la Loi dans la Lettre aux Romains* (LD 173; Paris 1998) 55-60.

<sup>(7)</sup> Cf. F. HEINIMANN, *Nomos und Physis. Herkunft und Bedeutung einer Antithese im Griechischen Denken des 5. Jahrhunderts* (SBA 1; Darmstadt 1972). Sur l'aspect "rhétorique" de l'argumentation paulinienne, cf. ALETTI, "Romains 1-3: Quelle fonction? ...", 475-498.



commandements de la Loi juive furent inscrits sur les tables de pierre transmises par Moïse.

En fait, les métaphores et les ambiguïtés du texte faisant entrer en jeu les divers sens de la référence à la "poésie" servent à dégager l'idée selon laquelle la spiritualité, non pas seulement du truchement de Dieu, mais aussi de ses auditeurs, constitue la condition nécessairement mise au respect de lois transcendantes. Selon Paul, pour être observées, ces règles doivent donc se manifester et être perçues comme l'émanation d'une expérience essentielle, ainsi que l'indique la dernière expression du verset 14: "ces gens sont une loi pour eux-mêmes".

Jacques fait lui aussi allusion à la nature humaine comme entité devant se substituer à la Loi pour fonder l'obéissance, après l'écoute des prescriptions divines. Mais sa perspective est alors typiquement chrétienne, dans la mesure où, dans son schéma de pensée, l'instinct des hommes doit en quelque sorte être fécondé par le Λόγος pour parvenir à une telle observance. Pour devenir poïétique, et ainsi amener à "faire", l'expression de la Loi doit donc transmettre à ses auditeurs l'inspiration de ce Λόγος, de cette Parole émanant de Dieu qui est définie comme ἔμφυτος, c'est-à-dire comme "greffée (ἐν-) dans la nature (φύσις) humaine"<sup>(8)</sup>. L'adjectif suggère une théologie de l'incarnation. Ainsi, là où le texte paulinien conserve comme référence fondamentale l'idée "d'écoute" et de "mise en pratique de la Loi": οἱ ἀκροαταὶ τοῦ νόμου, οἱ ποιηταὶ τοῦ νόμου, Jacques adopte systématiquement, pour sa part, des formulations qui résonnent comme autant d'allusions faites à l'évangile du Christ: ἀκροαταὶ λόγου, ποιηταὶ λόγου<sup>(9)</sup>. Néanmoins, dans les deux cas, la notion de *poésie* s'insère comme intermédiaire entre celles d'écoute et d'exécution de la Loi. Le recours aux concepts esthétiques du vocabulaire grec définit finalement l'obéissance comme le résultat d'une inspiration essentielle, communiquée à l'homme dans sa nature propre.

## II. Ποίησις et la référence à la poésie grecque dans l'Épître de Jacques

Assez paradoxalement, la solution apportée par les auteurs néotestamentaires à l'aporie tourmentant Ézéchiél acculture donc à la

<sup>(8)</sup> Sur le travail sémantique de Jacques dans cette expression, cf. DIBELIUS, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, 35, 113-114 où il montre la spiritualité du contexte. Cf. aussi C. BURCHARD, *Der Jakobusbrief* (HNT 15/1; Tübingen 2000) 83 sur les rapports avec l'aspect sotériologique du Λόγος et D. J. MOO, *The Letter of James* (TNTC 16; Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge U.K. 2000) 87-89.

<sup>(9)</sup> Rm 2,13; Jc 1,22-23.

pensée chrétienne la combinaison de deux notions grecques: φύσις (la nature) et ποίησις (la poésie), dans le jeu d'une réflexion très riche s'intéressant, avant de chercher à la transcender, à la beauté, c'est-à-dire d'une certaine manière à la grâce, d'une littérature païenne. De fait, la célébration de Dieu est comparée à l'art inspiré des poètes dans trois passages de l'épître qui jouent le rôle de points focaux, car ils concentrent quelques expressions complexes et polysémiques relatives à ce sujet. Ils contiennent notamment des emplois insolites du mot ποιητής, en relation avec les aspects de la célébration chrétienne, ou des allusions multiples à un vocabulaire technique de la poésie grecque. Par ailleurs, ces groupes de versets s'inscrivent dans une véritable constellation de termes plus ou moins isolés, tout au long du texte, qui possèdent les mêmes connotations et qui relayent cet effet métaphorique<sup>(10)</sup>. Le premier de ces développements est riche de procédés significatifs:

<sup>19</sup>Que tout être humain soit prompt à écouter, lent à s'exprimer, lent à la colère. <sup>20</sup>Car dans la colère (ὀργή) d'un homme ne peut pas s'organiser (ἐργάζεσθαι) la justice de Dieu ... <sup>22</sup>Devenez des poètes mettant en œuvre (ποιητής) la Parole (Λόγος) et non pas seulement des auditeurs qui s'égarant, passant à côté de sa signification essentielle (παπαλογίζεσθαι). <sup>23</sup>De fait, un auditeur de la Parole (Λόγος) qui ne la met pas en œuvre en tant que poète (ποιητής), ressemble à un homme qui perçoit le masque (πρόσωπον) de son devenir dans un miroir ... <sup>25</sup>En revanche, l'homme qui se penche sur la Loi de liberté, dans sa finalité, et se situe désormais dans ce cadre, ne devient pas un auditeur oublieux, mais un poète mettant en œuvre (ποιητής) une énergie (ἐργον). Et dans cette mise en œuvre (ποιήσις) résidera sa béatitude (1,19-25).

Dans ce texte, la signification du mot ποιητής ne peut guère être banalisée ou réduite. En effet, la récurrence même de ce terme et les alliances de mots assez paradoxales dans lesquelles il entre en jeu, incitent à lui accorder une attention particulière, voire à lui prêter un sens relativement original<sup>(11)</sup>. Évidemment, la racine du verbe grec ποιεῖν, dont est dérivé le nom d'agent ποιητής, indique une notion de production. Ainsi, la tournure employée par Jacques peut sembler transposer exactement des expressions hébraïques auxquelles elle se référerait. Car, dans la pensée juive, "faire la parole" équivaut à "en

<sup>(10)</sup> Cf. Jc 1,19-25; 3,13-18; 4,11-12.

<sup>(11)</sup> Six occurrences seulement du mot ποιητής figurent dans le Nouveau Testament, dont la majorité se trouve dans l'Épître de Jacques (Ac 17,28; Rm 2,13; Jc 1,22.23.25; 4,11) et une seule occurrence du substantif ποίησις (Jc 1,25).

accomplir la teneur”, et donc, passer à l'action. L'idée d'accomplissement s'applique alors au signifié de la parole. En conséquence, l'interprétation traditionnelle de ce passage consiste à considérer les “poètes” de la Parole comme des “réalisateurs” qui agissent dans le domaine du concret<sup>(12)</sup>. Mais cette interprétation ne tient pas compte de la valeur spécifique du mot grec. Car, comme l'explique P. Beck: “la poétique ‘artistique’ appartient en un sens à la sphère de la production, qui n'est pas la sphère de l'action, ni celle de la ‘théorie’”<sup>(13)</sup>. Dans ce cas, “faire la parole” consiste à la mettre au jour, comme une œuvre exprimant toute la beauté de l'être et du sens, et à la produire en tant que signifiant. Or, les indications contenues dans le champ sémantique des versets 19 à 25 définissent précisément toute parole de foi et toute entreprise d'évangélisation comme une véritable expression “artistique”, émanant finalement de Dieu.

En effet, au verset 25, sa Parole, agent de sa puissance, est qualifiée par cet adjectif, ἔμφυτος, qui renvoie précisément à la conception de l'inspiration, telle qu'elle se développe en Grèce dès l'époque archaïque<sup>(14)</sup>. Le vocabulaire est alors exactement le même que dans un texte homérique, notamment, où il est question de l'art de Phémios, chanteur génial favorisé par les Muses<sup>(15)</sup>. Selon les termes consacrés, elles ont “fait croître (verbe ἐμφύειν) dans son esprit toute sorte de poèmes”<sup>(16)</sup>. Le phénomène de “croissance” dont il est question est à

<sup>(12)</sup> E.g. cf. F. VOUGA, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques* (CNT 2/XIIIa; Genève 1984) 64 ou J.-C. INGELAERE, “La structure littéraire de l'Épître de Jacques”, *FV* 42 (2003) 30.

<sup>(13)</sup> Aristote, *Poétique* (Tel 272; Paris 1996) 11.

<sup>(14)</sup> Cette conception perdure, pour l'essentiel, jusqu'à la période classique et dans toute l'Antiquité grecque, dans la mesure où les poètes, revendiquant de plus en plus, au fil de l'histoire, la responsabilité de leur création artistique, attribuent néanmoins toujours un rôle originel ou conjoint à l'inspiration des Muses. Cf. J. ASSAËL, *Pour une poétique de l'inspiration, d'Homère à Euripide* (Collection d'études classiques 21; Namur 2006).

<sup>(15)</sup> La culture grecque de Jacques est un fait bien établi. Cf. VOUGA, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, 16: “notre auteur mobilise les ressources d'une culture impressionnante. Profondément enraciné dans l'héritage vétéro-testamentaire et juif, il est familier des classiques grecs et manie avec aisance la rhétorique des moralistes cyniques ou stoïciens (...). Notre auteur se sert de ses références littéraires avec beaucoup de précision pour éclairer le monde qui l'entoure et interpréter la réalité qu'il décrit. Les citations de l'AT voisinent ainsi les renvois à Épictète ou à Sénèque, les thèmes évangéliques s'ornent des tournures de la sagesse hellénistique et les oracles prophétiques s'émaillent d'allusions à Hippocrate ou à Sophocle”.

<sup>(16)</sup> *Od.* XXII, 345.

mettre en relation avec l'idée de génération. Dans le contexte néotestamentaire, en évoquant l'image d'une Parole engendrée, présentée, qui plus est, comme capable d'apporter le salut aux hommes, l'adjectif ἔμφωτος suggère l'identité de Jésus-Christ, à travers toutes ses dénotations. Ainsi, tout comme les poètes antiques, considérés comme les élus des Muses, se faisaient, en quelque sorte, leurs truchements, la parénèse incite les fidèles à accueillir en eux ce Λόγος comme une inspiration divine, et à en répercuter la voix.

Jacques précise ensuite le parallèle établi entre la célébration chrétienne et les genres poétiques grecs de l'Antiquité<sup>(17)</sup>. Il évoque alors un type de représentation qui mêle les effets de l'audition (ἄκροατής) et ceux de la vision, avec l'image du miroir en particulier. En effet, au verset 23, le fonctionnement de ces deux ressorts semble tout d'abord pris en compte séparément, à travers une comparaison; mais finalement, ces deux aspects se contaminent, dans le verset 25, lorsqu'il s'agit de définir la "mise en œuvre" à laquelle doit se livrer un vrai disciple. Or, la combinaison de ces deux éléments ne peut correspondre qu'aux caractéristiques des représentations théâtrales issues de l'âge classique<sup>(18)</sup>. Effectivement, dans le monde grec, puis

(17) Cf. B. DELORME, *Le Christ grec. De la tragédie aux évangiles* (Paris 2009) 28: "Ce cadre général de la *mimēsis* [...] peut, selon nous, nous aider à comprendre le fonctionnement du christianisme dans ses premières manifestations, à savoir le déroulement des premières liturgies".

(18) L'angle dramatique sous lequel Jacques envisage d'esquisser sa "poétique" chrétienne fonde l'hypothèse selon laquelle il réfléchit à ces catégories en référence aux théories aristotéliennes. Car dans sa *Poétique*, le philosophe grec s'intéresse principalement à la tragédie. L'auteur néotestamentaire a pu connaître ses analyses par un contact plus ou moins direct, car elles ont été diffusées par toute l'école péripatéticienne notamment: "Le texte de la *Poétique* paraît avoir été très peu répandu dans l'antiquité [...]. Les idées d'Aristote sur la tragédie et sur la comédie furent transmises par les grammairiens et les critiques. Horace ne paraît pas avoir connu la *Poétique* d'Aristote mais il avait sous les yeux celle d'un péripatéticien de la fin du III<sup>ème</sup> siècle, le grammairien Néoptolème de Paros" — J. HARDY, *Aristote. Poétique* (Collection des Universités de France; Paris 1977) 22, n. 2. Compte tenu de la large culture hellénique dont fait preuve l'auteur de cette épître, il serait tout à fait étrange qu'il cherche à provoquer toute une réflexion sur la notion de poétique sans s'être documenté sur les théories des philosophes faisant autorité en la matière. A. LÉONAS, *L'aube des traducteurs* (Initiations bibliques; Paris 2007) 193, rappelle l'estime manifestée par la tradition juive envers Aristote et l'espèce d'émulation que sa notoriété suscite: "Le récit de la rencontre d'Aristote avec un sage juif est rapporté par Cléarque de Soli et préservé chez Josèphe [...]. Cette anecdote, qu'elle soit apocryphe ou non, véhicule la même image du Juif philosophe, digne interlocuteur du *princeps philosophorum*".

hellénistique, elles ont pour support des œuvres de nature poétique, qu'elles soient tragiques ou comiques et les dramaturges sont considérés comme les "poètes" par excellence. Jacques se réfère donc au répertoire de la poésie dramatique pour proposer un modèle structurel dont l'expression de la foi chrétienne peut se rapprocher à certains égards, sur le plan formel, même si, dans son intention, elle se démarque, fondamentalement, de ce type de création artistique.

Le vocabulaire confirme d'ailleurs la relation établie, sur les plans métaphorique et technique, entre le mode théâtral de représentation et les ressorts de la prédication chrétienne, par exemple. Car le spectacle auquel il est fait allusion, au verset 23, pour illustrer les effets fascinants de la révélation exercée par la Parole produit la vision d'un masque (πρόσωπον), accessoire typique et indispensable, utilisé dans toutes les mises en scène des pièces grecques. Mais le terme qui le désigne est ambivalent, dans ce registre particulier: en effet, il recouvre aussi les notions de "personnage" ou de "personne". En revanche, dans le contexte biblique, ce même mot désigne plus souvent un visage, et éventuellement la face de Dieu. Jacques joue donc avec toutes ces acceptions pour laisser transparaître la nature de l'expérience vécue par l'auditeur d'un rituel religieux qui découvrirait le visage de Dieu et son drame terrestre en Jésus-Christ, à travers les échos de sa Parole, annoncée comme par un auteur dont la langue aurait la puissance créatrice de la poésie et répétée comme par des acteurs qui répercuteraient la vibration mystérieuse des mots et la sacralité des gestes.

Jacques utilise d'ailleurs étrangement l'image et l'architecture scénique de la représentation dramatique pour figurer le déroulement d'une telle aventure. Car sa démonstration se fonde sur la même distribution des lieux que celle, conventionnelle au théâtre, qui distingue l'espace des spectateurs et celui des comédiens. Or, dans ce cadre, par le biais de la μίμησις, le public reconnaît alors sa propre image dans le spectacle qui lui est proposé et il contemple la condition humaine, à travers une fiction critique lui procurant une émotion d'ordre esthétique<sup>(19)</sup>. Mais dans le texte biblique, l'écran impalpable créant la séparation entre le public et les acteurs est désigné comme la surface d'un miroir et les effets de représentation de la Parole agissent d'une manière tout à fait spécifique, pratiquement fantastique. En effet, le fond du décor où elle résonne absorbe le monde réel, vain et

(19) Sur la valeur mimétique de l'art, théorisée, après Platon, par Aristote, cf. notamment *Poétique*, 1447a16-1448a28.

inconsistant, pour lui donner une substance pleine; et, sous le visage des célébrants, qui, comme un masque, renvoie à un référent essentiel, se dessinent les traits du Christ. L'image qui se forme ne reflète donc pas simplement la photographie du public, en tant que source du phénomène, mais elle envoie, du fond de la scène, un rayonnement qui révèle la véritable nature des êtres et la dramaturgie de leur vie. Les spectateurs qui s'intéressent assez à cette représentation sont, en quelque sorte, happés, aspirés; ils passent de l'autre côté de l'écran. Tel est le mécanisme "théâtral" bien particulier par lequel Jacques suggère les effets de la célébration chrétienne agissant, grâce à la parole et à la vision de son enthousiasme, au-delà même de la fascination. Le public est alors placé dans la situation qui convient pour partager, comme par contagion, l'inspiration des "poètes du Λόγος" et pour s'en faire lui aussi le chantre. Une célébration de Dieu qui produit de tels effets se révèle alors inspirée par l'esprit du Christ et productive de sa présence, c'est-à-dire pleinement "poétique", au sens d'une esthétique grecque puissamment transcendée.

Jacques passe d'ailleurs systématiquement en revue tous les ressorts de la poétique classique pour en transposer le sens et la valeur. Ainsi, lorsque l'auditeur perçoit, comme dans un miroir, un visage lui montrant qui il est, cette rencontre avec soi-même, si elle est concluante, se situe au début d'une évolution (γένεσις) au cours de laquelle il perçoit et accomplit son propre être. Or, en imaginant cette situation symbolique, Jacques adapte, en fait, un procédé théâtral répertorié par Aristote sous le nom de ἀναγνώρισις, qui désigne une scène de reconnaissance. Mais, dans les pièces grecques, ce procédé est mis en œuvre lors du dénouement dramatique, dans des épisodes où un personnage découvre brusquement son identité, où des liens de parenté jusqu'alors ignorés se révèlent enfin à lui. En revanche, la prise de conscience qui s'effectue, dans la représentation de la foi, à travers la contemplation d'un reflet à la fois personnel et divin, ouvre le début d'une vie nouvelle. La véritable action dramatique commence dès cet instant et elle est annoncée comme béatifique.

Jacques introduit aussi dans son vocabulaire un mot qui constitue bien plus qu'une allusion ou une référence implicite à la catégorie aristotélicienne de la "péripiétie". En effet, il utilise, au tout début de l'épître, le verbe περιπίπτειν qui est de la même famille, et il illustre ainsi une théologie exprimée sous la forme d'un art poétique<sup>(20)</sup>. Car

(20) Jc 1,2. Sur ce sujet, cf. *Poétique* 1452a.

l'auteur néotestamentaire montre alors comment, dans la perspective chrétienne, les aléas, les "coups de théâtre" qui jalonnent une vie sont transcendés par la finalité (τέλος) fixée par Dieu, et il encourage ses lecteurs à développer "une constance qui produise une œuvre parfaite, afin de devenir eux-mêmes parfaits"<sup>(21)</sup>. Les termes acquièrent un relief intéressant s'ils sont interprétés, en eux-mêmes et dans leurs rapports mutuels, comme les éléments d'une théorie poétique. De fait, Aristote emploie, pour sa part, le substantif τέλος pour désigner, au-delà de la complexité et du cours éventuellement sinueux d'une intrigue, la fin ultime à laquelle elle doit idéalement parvenir, dans sa perfection et d'après la logique inhérente à son esthétique propre<sup>(22)</sup>. Dans le contexte de l'épître, l'adjectif martelé dans la phrase (τέλειος) salue le résultat auquel aboutit l'être humain travaillant sur lui-même et faisant en quelque sorte artistement de sa vie une œuvre conforme au projet divin, dans sa beauté.

La "poétique" chrétienne esquissée par Jacques est d'ailleurs précisée par un autre terme: ἀπλῶς, hapax dans le Nouveau Testament, qui définit la pureté du processus de création produit par Dieu. Or, ce vocabulaire coïncide encore avec le lexique technique des classifications aristotéliennes. En effet, pour le philosophe, il existe plusieurs types de trames dramatiques: certaines ont une forme simple (ἀπλοῖ); d'autres, en revanche, ont un déroulement plus chaotique, ou se décomposent en plusieurs intrigues parallèles<sup>(23)</sup>. Mais dans l'épître se dégage la vision d'une existence qui, passant au travers des épreuves multiples et variées se présentant à elle, doit cependant se développer comme en droite ligne, selon l'itinéraire sans détour correspondant au dessein divin. Ainsi, émergeant de l'arrière-plan tragique ou tourmenté de la vie, la célébration chrétienne fait nécessairement retentir les accents d'un chant joyeux discernant le sûr schéma dramatique inventé, comme une épure, dans le plan de Dieu.

De fait, dès le début de son texte, l'auteur engage ses destinataires à "conduire des chœurs qui ne montreront que la joie". La formule, un peu elliptique, avec le verbe ἡγεῖσθαι, est calquée sur le vocabulaire technique du lyrisme et des spectacles grecs. Cependant, la tonalité de

<sup>(21)</sup> Jc 1,4.

<sup>(22)</sup> Cf. notamment *Poétique* 1450a, où Aristote affirme que "la fin (τέλος) [de la tragédie] consiste dans une action (πρᾶξις) et non pas dans un état qualitatif", puis que "les actes (πράγματα) et la fable (μῦθος) sont la fin (τέλος) de la tragédie; et la fin (τέλος) est le principal".

<sup>(23)</sup> Cf. *Poétique*, 1451b, 1452a, etc.

la célébration chrétienne ne correspond à aucun des genres théâtraux existants, puisqu'elle est anti-tragique, mais que, par ailleurs, sa gaîté est complètement dénuée de la dérision marquant la comédie antique. En préconisant aux croyants la mise en œuvre et l'interprétation d'hymnes vibrant de leur reconnaissance, Jacques définit une catégorie poétique spécifique, celle d'un drame joyeux chantant la véritable essence d'un réel transcendé.

Dans cette perspective, Jacques aborde aussi la question de la vertu poïétique, plus que poétique en l'occurrence, de la célébration chrétienne en critiquant le principe d'une typologie des personnages. Cette donnée est pourtant fondamentale dans toute mise en scène de théâtre. Elle permet, en effet, de créer les structures de cet univers de fiction. Mais l'auteur néotestamentaire dénonce l'art ou l'artifice consistant à exposer une image qui schématise et fige la vérité de l'être. Car les manifestations de la vie religieuse font intervenir des personnes, et non pas des humains immuablement typés d'après leur qualité dominante. Ainsi, en 1,9-11, Jacques ne condamne pas les riches en tant que tels, car, pour lui, les hommes ne sont pas définis, devant Dieu, selon de tels critères mais, tous, à un moment ou à un autre, pourront constater leur insignifiance. L'invitation à s'enorgueillir de son humilité s'adresse, en fait, à toutes les catégories d'individus: aux nantis et aux pauvres, dans une dialectique paradoxale qui aboutit à proclamer l'égalité essentielle de tous les mortels. La critique sociale a donc une dimension spirituelle, car Jacques prévient surtout du caractère aléatoire de la richesse et des falsifications qu'elle peut entraîner dans une identité humaine, et il dénonce la prospérité comme un leurre "masquant" (πρόσωπον, 1,11) la véritable profondeur de l'être<sup>(24)</sup>.

Par ailleurs, en 2,1-7, Jacques évoque un monde où la distribution des rôles est répartie entre riches et pauvres. Or, ni les masques, ni les costumes, ni les accessoires ne doivent constituer des critères pertinents dans la vie chrétienne, interprétée comme le livret d'une partition orchestrée par Dieu. En réalité, Jacques interdit tout favoritisme fondé sur des distinctions sociales. La partialité dont il est

(24) En 5,1-6, l'auteur se lance dans une violente diatribe contre les riches lorsqu'ils abusent de leur supériorité pour tyranniser leurs subordonnés. Il maudit la pratique de ces exactions, plus qu'un état social, dans un contexte parénétique qui vise successivement diverses faiblesses humaines. Sur ce thème, cf. C. PRIETO, "Malédiction des mauvais riches de la communauté. Jacques 5,1-6", *FV* 42 (2003) 73-81.



question est ainsi dénoncée sous le nom de *προσωποληψία*, mot rare et recherché dont l'idée est récurrente dans l'épître<sup>(25)</sup>. Comme le terme simple *πρόσωπον* à partir duquel il est formé, il désigne et conceptualise le choix erroné d'apparences inconsistantes, ne reconnaissant pas comme principe l'égale dignité de tous les hommes. En mettant en cause ces usages et leur philosophie de l'humain, Jacques suggère, en fait, l'esthétique créatrice et la spiritualité d'un "art" tout différent. La parole, les sons et les gestes de la célébration religieuse ont alors vocation à illustrer et à produire la vraie substance et la véritable épaisseur de la réalité, sans se servir d'éléments autres que le visage et la personne des hommes, reflétant l'image de Dieu. Ainsi, contrairement à une œuvre fondée sur les effets de la *μίμησις* qui, selon les théories de Platon, dégrade l'ordre du réel, la représentation de la foi fait pour sa part advenir la nature de l'homme.

Selon le même procédé de référence critique pratiqué à l'égard des catégories de la poésie grecque, Jacques définit aussi, d'une certaine manière, un lyrisme propre à la célébration chrétienne. En effet, de son point de vue, dans l'espace de la vie et du culte, l'homme doit résister à toute dérive et demeurer, immobile, ancré dans sa confiance en Dieu. L'être humain s'attache ainsi à un point d'équilibre, comme dans les chorégraphies des pièces antiques, lorsque les chants du chœur interrompent le cours de l'action par des *στάσιμα* qui constituent autant de pauses dans l'agitation dramatique, ainsi que l'indique l'étymologie de ce mot. Or, la même racine intervient à la forme négative, à travers le mot *ἀκατάστατος*, lorsque Jacques fustige tout individu partagé qui ne sait pas se tenir avec fermeté dans la certitude de la puissance divine<sup>(26)</sup>. L'impiété du doute maintient alors les hommes dans des turbulences, sans qu'ils puissent parvenir à la paix recherchée dans toute forme de lyrisme. Appliquées à la liturgie, ces indications préconisent, littéralement, un certain *statisme*, des attitudes hiératiques.

Une occurrence du substantif négatif correspondant, *ἀκαταστασία*, se trouve d'ailleurs insérée dans un autre point focal de l'épître (3,13-18) où le registre lexical de l'analyse poétique est richement illustré: *καλή ἀναστροφή* (v. 13); *τὰ ἔργα* (v. 14); *ἄνωθεν* (v. 15 et 17); *ἀκαταστασία* (v. 16); *ἀνυπόκριτος* (v. 17); *τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρήνην* (v. 18).

(25) L'une à travers un substantif, en 2,1; l'autre à partir du verbe correspondant, en 2,9. Sur l'histoire de ce mot, cf. VOUGA, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, 70-71.

(26) Jc 1,8; 3,8.

Jacques s'oppose, là encore, à ce type de "dérèglement" inesthétique produit par une vie se déroulant sans les repères de la foi. Mais, avec un humour exquis, il se refuse à adopter sans de légers correctifs la terminologie de la poésie grecque et il substitue au découpage traditionnel d'une ode grecque en strophes et antistrophes, la notion d'anastrophe qu'il recommande comme la meilleure expression de la foi chrétienne. Dans la langue courante, le sens de ce terme, lorsqu'il est, comme dans ce passage, qualifié par l'idée de beauté, a dérivé jusqu'à désigner un comportement digne, des bonnes mœurs. Cependant, dans les versets suivants (15 et 17), l'auteur détache et fait résonner avec insistance le préverbe qui sert à constituer ce mot et qui, originellement, traduit une idée de hauteur. Le lecteur est alors invité à interpréter ce terme en privilégiant la valeur étymologique de ses éléments et Jacques précise ainsi les caractéristiques d'une œuvre de célébration: elle sera composée d'anastrophes, c'est-à-dire de strophes qui s'élèvent vers le ciel. Et des épistrophes leur répondront, selon l'indication réitérée contenue dans l'avant-dernier verset de l'épître! Il y est question, *a priori*, de l'effet salutaire des admonestations adressées à un frère pécheur. Mais, dans ce contexte, le terme évoque aussi une expression poétique de la foi, une strophe qui s'adresse à l'autre, au prochain, comme le suggère le préfixe ἐπι-. Dans une ode ou dans une pièce grecques, strophe et antistrophe sont dansées au cours d'un cycle de mouvements alternés, autour d'un centre. Manifestement, la symbolique de cette gestuelle contrastée qui tourne en rond ne convient pas à l'auteur de cette épître. Il construit donc avec précision le répertoire de son vocabulaire technique en détournant le lexique grec correspondant et il fonde son esthétique sur une spiritualité spécifique qui élève et porte vers autrui. Mais, en établissant cette comparaison implicite avec les formes traditionnelles du lyrisme antique, Jacques définit aussi à cet égard la célébration chrétienne comme un type de poésie, d'expression artistique.

Ainsi, parce que le théâtre met en place une architecture dans le cadre de laquelle des spectateurs voient et entendent une parole provenant d'un espace différent, il peut constituer un modèle structurel pour des célébrants qui veulent faire entendre l'Évangile et communiquer la vision d'une communauté fraternelle représentant la joie de la vie chrétienne. Par ailleurs, les drames antiques étant composés sur un mode inspiré, ils fournissent, sur ce plan aussi, un point de comparaison intéressant pour un auteur néotestamentaire qui cherche à théoriser les règles d'une célébration enthousiaste. Mais, en fait,

Jacques utilise systématiquement cette référence comme un contre-exemple; il s'en démarque en imaginant, avec une précision qui n'est pas dénuée de dérision vis-à-vis de l'art grec, des formes correspondantes qui soient adaptées à la louange chrétienne, nécessairement poétique puisqu'elle aspire à traduire l'indicible. De plus, dans cette perspective, par rapport aux œuvres de fiction composant le répertoire du drame grec, l'expression de la foi se révèle créative, sinon créatrice, de la véritable image, des véritables sonorités et du vrai langage du réel. Par tout un ensemble de procédés stylistiques, Jacques s'emploie à montrer qu'elle possède donc, par excellence, les vertus poétiques d'une poésie grecque transcendée.

### III. Ποίησις et la notion d'efficiencia

En dehors de cette méthode comparative par laquelle Jacques définit l'expression de la foi par rapport au drame grec, il construit aussi plus directement un "art poétique" de la parole chrétienne. En réalité, le genre ainsi inventé est polymorphe et il est illustré par des formes de langage ou par d'autres modes de comportement, pour autant qu'ils se montrent productifs de l'image et de la perception du Λόγος. Les dimensions verbale et factuelle des activités humaines sont donc associées. En conséquence, la connotation "activiste" du verbe ποιεῖν, qui signifie "faire", doit aussi être prise en considération, comme l'indication d'un aspect possible des manifestations spontanées et inspirées de la foi.

De fait, Jacques crée, en quelque sorte, une catégorie technique pour désigner la poésie de la célébration chrétienne comme un genre artistique ayant sa nature et ses caractéristiques propres. Il réhabilite à cet effet le substantif θρησκειά, très rarement employé dans le Nouveau Testament, et il invente l'adjectif correspondant, θρησκός<sup>(27)</sup>. La valeur classificatoire donnée à ces mots confère la seule logique repérable dans l'enchaînement des versets, lorsque l'auteur passe, sans autre transition, de l'idée d'une vertu poétique de l'expression cultuelle: "Et dans cette mise en œuvre résidera la béatitude du poète..." (1,25), à des recommandations réglementant la θρησκειά (1,26).

La dévotion à laquelle ce mot renvoie habituellement est alors prise

<sup>(27)</sup> 1,26-27. Le terme est attesté, par ailleurs, deux fois dans le Nouveau Testament (Ac 26,5; Col 2,18) avec une valeur relativement péjorative, pour désigner une forme de piété dénoncée comme peu judicieuse, et mise en question. Cf. VOUGA, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, 66.

en compte, en premier lieu, à travers sa manifestation dans le discours religieux et elle est représentée, plus précisément, comme une capacité à maîtriser le langage, de manière à traduire très exactement les sentiments, sans laisser l’emballement des phrases altérer la justesse et la vérité de la pensée. La *θησκεία* se fonde ainsi sur le choix sobre et précis, sur la densité en quelque sorte poétique des mots de la foi. Le texte indique ensuite comment la *θησκεία*, en tant que célébration chrétienne, s’exerce aussi dans le domaine de la solidarité fraternelle, selon l’exemple donné des visites diaconales rendues aux orphelins et aux veuves (1,27) et, d’autre part, dans l’ordre d’une discipline intérieure, d’une ascèse plus ou moins anachorétique, “loin du monde”, d’un travail sur soi (1,27). L’expression de la foi apparaît donc comme multiforme et transgénérique, elle entre dans les modalités de la parole et de l’action, dans les formes du langage comme dans la suggestivité d’un recueillement silencieux <sup>(28)</sup>.

D’ailleurs, Jacques condamne toute parole dont la piété ne se manifeste pas, simultanément, à travers ces catégories associées du silence et de l’action. De manière assez paradoxale, cette épître parodie le style des bénédictions traditionnelles. En fait, son ironie s’attaque alors aux litanies destinées à demeurer sans effet, qui semblent ne développer leur éloquence que pour mieux dissimuler l’indigence pratique de ceux qui les formulent: “Allez en paix, réchauffés, rassasiés...” <sup>(29)</sup>. La première partie de la formule peut clairement être identifiée comme une clause liturgique usuelle <sup>(30)</sup>. Puis, le rythme de l’expression se déploie dans un mouvement ternaire, selon les règles de la meilleure rhétorique, et les verbes riment entre eux dans un écho très élégant. Mais Jacques ne préconise pas un tel type de “poésie” s’il ne célèbre Dieu que par la beauté formelle d’un discours creux, sans produire un véritable élan de générosité. Il critique aussi l’emphase avec laquelle sont prononcés les principes fondamentaux de la foi: “Dieu est unique” <sup>(31)</sup>. De son point de vue, l’évidence du propos le

<sup>(28)</sup> Sur ce point, cf. P.H. DAVIDS, *The Epistle of James. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1982) 103.

<sup>(29)</sup> Jc 2,17.

<sup>(30)</sup> Cf. VOUGA, *L’Épître de Saint Jacques*, 87: “‘Allez en paix’ est une formulation juive, utilisée parfois simplement comme salutation [...], mais aussi comme envoi et comme bénédiction (...). Elle appartient sans doute ici au langage liturgique”.

<sup>(31)</sup> 2,19. Cf. VOUGA, *L’Épître de Saint Jacques*, 88: “La formule ‘croire qu’il n’y a qu’un seul Dieu’ est une tournure judéo-chrétienne hellénisée du premier commandement (...) qui pouvait rassembler autour d’elle un large consensus”.

rend presque inutile et, pour lui, la confession de foi ne doit pas devenir une cérémonie solennelle dans laquelle le célébrant s'auto-glorifie de sa spiritualité qui demeure abstraite et stérile. Par ces mises en cause, Jacques ne vise évidemment pas à exclure les bénédictions et les confessions de foi des rites cultuels, mais il invite en tout cas à n'énoncer que des paroles sobres, serties d'un silence recherchant et suscitant en profondeur une prise de conscience efficiente et inspirée du sens des mots.

Ces règles s'appliquent à tous les discours des hommes. Ainsi, lorsqu'il convient de prendre un engagement, Jacques interdit les serments et il recommande seulement: "Que ton 'oui' soit oui". Le langage du croyant ne recherche donc pas sa force dans l'emphase d'une invocation, mais dans le style simple d'une promesse coïncidant avec une vraie détermination. Alors, la nature de l'affirmation apparaît comme transmutée puisque sa substance, le signifié, advient à la réalité, du simple fait de son énonciation, comme dans la Genèse, lorsque Dieu crée par sa parole. Les déclarations humaines résonnent donc comme pour exprimer l'énergie qu'elles s'apprêtent à mettre en œuvre.

En conséquence, dans diverses formulations de ce texte, les termes se référant à la parole interviennent logiquement dans des couples de mots où ils sont associés au vocabulaire de la réalisation concrète: "Dites et agissez (verbe: ποιεῖν) en hommes destinés à être jugés selon la loi de liberté"<sup>(32)</sup>. Car l'expression de la pensée n'a pas vocation à demeurer inopérante, mais de même que dans un rituel religieux public l'écoute et la participation se confondent, de même dans tous les aspects de la vie chrétienne l'énoncé d'une idée correspond aussi à sa mise en œuvre. La θρησκεία fait donc intervenir des personnages dont le rôle est contraire, par essence, à celui d'un comédien. Telle est d'ailleurs l'indication littérale fournie par l'adjectif définissant sa pratique comme ἀνυπόκριτος, "opposée à l'art des acteurs"<sup>(33)</sup>. Ainsi, alors que, en montrant un spectacle comme tel, le théâtre distingue et délimite l'espace du virtuel et celui du réel, toute forme de célébration chrétienne, quelle qu'elle soit, opère, pour sa part, une fusion complète entre la représentation et la réalité, et aussi entre l'ordre de la parole et celui d'une action pleine et vraie.

En fait, l'efficiencia des mots prononcés par un Chrétien, provient de la conscience vive avec laquelle il les formule et du poids de

<sup>(32)</sup> Jc 2,12.

<sup>(33)</sup> Jc 3,17.

signification charnelle, en quelque sorte, qu'il leur donne afin que Dieu y réponde en insufflant son énergie. De manière très significative, alors que dans la querelle opposant les champions d'une foi exclusive aux promoteurs des bonnes œuvres, Jacques dénie le pouvoir salvateur de la confession de foi en elle-même: "Est-ce que, par hasard, la confession de foi (πίστις) a le pouvoir de sauver?"<sup>(34)</sup>, il précise sa pensée, dans la conclusion de l'épître, en produisant une assertion en apparence contradictoire qui assure de l'efficacité du sentiment religieux: "La prière de la foi (πίστις) sauvera le malade..."<sup>(35)</sup>. La différence qui s'établit entre ces deux formules consiste non pas dans le vocabulaire employé, mais dans l'attitude priante ou non de celui qui exprime sa foi et qui cherche à la rendre agissante. La *θηρησκεία* se présente donc comme un genre qui englobe des sous-groupes: celui de la prière, du psaume, de l'incantation, etc. Jacques termine sa lettre en énumérant toute la variété de ces catégories<sup>(36)</sup>. Elle se définit, spécialement à travers la prière, comme une activité à la fois poétique et poïétique du croyant, selon un double rapport d'adéquation à la notion de "poésie" désignant l'organisation tout au moins littérairement sacralisée d'un discours, et la "mise en œuvre" de la parole, d'après le sens originel du verbe d'action ποιῆν<sup>(37)</sup>.

Pour autant, les "poètes de la parole" en sont-ils vraiment les "réalisateurs"? La sémantique grecque, avec la double dénotation non seulement factuelle, mais aussi esthétique du mot ποιήσις, ajoute des nuances essentielles à une interprétation qui ne se référerait qu'aux structures idiomatiques de l'hébreu.

#### IV. Ποίησις et ἔργον: la poésie comme mise en œuvre d'une énergie

En fait, les emplois du mot ἔργον et du verbe correspondant éclairent la valeur précise de la notion de ποιήσις. Pour sa part, dans la *Poétique*, Aristote utilise le mot ἔργον pour définir la puissance intrinsèque qu'exerce la tragédie sur l'esprit des spectateurs<sup>(38)</sup>. Or, dans ce type de contexte où il est question du pouvoir d'une œuvre de l'esprit, ἔργον n'intervient plus dans les phrases comme le deuxième terme d'un couple antithétique qui, traditionnellement, l'oppose à

<sup>(34)</sup> Jc 2,14.

<sup>(35)</sup> Jc 5,15.

<sup>(36)</sup> Jc 5,13-18.

<sup>(37)</sup> SIMON ("Pourquoi aimer l'épître de Jacques", 88) synthétise bien les rapports entre les mots, avec cette formule: "Soyez les poètes de la prière".

<sup>(38)</sup> Cf. *Poétique*, 1450a31, b6; 1451a37; 1452b29, etc.

λόγος, comme le discours s'oppose aux faits, comme l'apparence s'oppose à la réalité. Mais, dans une théorie des genres littéraires, le langage possède en lui-même une vertu efficiente. Ainsi, parmi les jeux verbaux auxquels Jacques se livre, les deux expressions ποιητής Λόγου ("poète mettant en œuvre la Parole") et ποιητής ἔργου ("poète mettant en œuvre une énergie") deviennent pratiquement synonymes; le tissu sémantique se révèle alors parfaitement solide, puisque les mots se renforcent mutuellement, pour désigner tantôt la nature du discours inspiré (Λόγου), tantôt la manifestation de sa dynamique interne (ἔργου).

Par ailleurs, l'épître est encadrée par des formes verbales dans lesquelles intervient la racine du mot ἔργον, avec un sens étrangement éloigné d'une idée de productivité matérielle ou d'une effectivité objective et concrète. Le premier emploi se situe au tout début du texte, lorsque Jacques enseigne que "l'épreuve de la foi produit (κατεργάζεται) la persévérance" <sup>(39)</sup> et lorsqu'il exhorte: "Que votre persévérance ait un parfait effet (ἔργον), afin que vous soyez parfaits" <sup>(40)</sup>. Dans ce passage, le mot ἔργον évoque alors un processus fondé, en quelque sorte, sur une acceptation du réel (sans résignation), sur une attente (sans attentisme) et sur l'immobilité du sujet (sans immobilisme), mais non pas sur une prise d'initiative et sur une réaction offensive.

À l'autre bout du texte, il est question, "du fait de son énergie intrinsèque (ἐνεργουμένη), de la puissance propre à la prière de demande formulée par un juste" <sup>(41)</sup>. La formule est employée au passif, ce qui suggère l'image d'une personne devenant, sans effort conscient ni volontariste, le foyer en lequel se développe naturellement le pouvoir actif et vivifiant de sa justice. Le procédé montre clairement que Jacques ne s'intéresse pas essentiellement aux réalisations caractérisant la démarche poétique de célébration chrétienne, mais qu'il tend à représenter la nature de son dynamisme spécifique.

Du reste, le mot πρᾶξις n'est jamais employé, dans l'épître, ni aucune forme du verbe correspondant, de manière à définir l'action de fidèles qui chercheraient à concrétiser l'élan spirituel qui les anime. La seule mention du mot apparenté πρᾶγμα figurant dans cette lettre, est appliquée, péjorativement, aux "affaires" malsaines fomentées par la

<sup>(39)</sup> Jc 1,3.

<sup>(40)</sup> Jc 1,4.

<sup>(41)</sup> Jc 5,16.

querelle et par la jalousie<sup>(42)</sup>. L'auteur se sert donc exclusivement de la famille du mot ἔργον et des connotations des mots ποιήσις ou ποιητής pour rendre compte des particularités de l'action chrétienne, en tant que telle. Ainsi, lorsque J.-L. Nancy interprète le passage le plus connu du texte, sur l'opposition entre la "foi" et les "œuvres", à partir des notions de πρᾶξις et d'effectivité, son commentaire nécessite quelques ajustements, bien qu'à tous égards il fasse considérablement progresser la compréhension de ces versets: "l'*ergon* est compris, de manière générale, comme l'effectivité beaucoup plus que comme la production, et comme l'être-en-acte beaucoup plus que comme l'*operari* d'un *opus*. Cette logique est si précise et si contraignante qu'elle nous oblige à décaler une certaine compréhension de l'*ergon* qui nous est habituelle, et de même notre appréhension platonicienne et aristotélicienne de la *poiesis* — mot qui est apparu en I, 25, lié à l'*ergon*, et que tout oblige à penser, comme le font plusieurs traducteurs, avec le sens de "pratique" (donc, de praxis), si praxis est bien l'action en tant que de l'agent et non sur un objet"<sup>(43)</sup>. En réalité, en lisant le mot ἔργον, il faut certainement remonter au-delà de l'objet, mais encore plus en amont que l'agent, car Jacques signale la source de l'énergie en question et, à travers le terme ποιήσις, il évoque le processus de mise en œuvre, considéré dans son essence et dans son origine inspirée, plus que dans son déroulement pratique. Dans cette perspective, la personne de l'agent importe peu, non plus que la substance de son action propre, ou à titre subsidiaire. Mais dans la mesure où elle devient le vecteur fonctionnel ou le relais d'une efficience qui se révèle en elle, elle incarne le principe actif d'une œuvre à porter au jour.

La focalisation sur cet aspect initial de l'action ne semble pas correspondre à la représentation des ἔργα sous la forme d'œuvres diaconales manifestant l'aboutissement concret de la foi. Mais, dans la dispute illustrée par les propos de Jacques entre la foi et les œuvres, il faut tenir compte du schématisme ironique de l'expression. Car, dans le débat, l'interlocuteur qui privilégie les œuvres use, non sans provocation, d'un exemple extrême qui, apparemment, met en valeur la phase accomplie de la spiritualité en actes. Toutefois, cette prise de position s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une réflexion où il est question, avant tout, de la démonstration de la foi, de sa manifestation, de sa visibilité, comme au théâtre, en vue d'un phénomène de communication

<sup>(42)</sup> Jc 3,16.

<sup>(43)</sup> J.-L. NANCY, *La décloison*. Déconstruction du christianisme 1 (Paris 2005) 76-77.



contagieuse, d'évangélisation sensible, en quelque sorte. De fait, une voix réclame, dans le texte: "Montre-moi ta foi..."<sup>(44)</sup> Jacques postule alors que l'ἔργον, l'œuvre, la réalisation concrète constitue un meilleur gage du caractère substantiel de la foi et une meilleure preuve de sa force d'énergie qu'une confession de foi pouvant être récitée par automatisme ou par convention, et ne rester qu'un discours creux. Mais à côté de ces exemples qui produisent un effet maximal d'évidence, l'auteur reconnaît aussi comme une source d'édification les "effets (ἔργα) provenant d'un comportement élevé, dans la douceur et la sagesse"<sup>(45)</sup>. Il indique ainsi que la suggestion du sentiment religieux admet des modes moins matériels.

Surtout, son raisonnement ne peut être convaincant que si un critère permet de distinguer l'inspiration vraie animant des actes objectifs. Car, sans cela, la pratique concrète d'une solidarité humaine pourrait demeurer aussi vaine, aussi peu éclairante, aussi peu enthousiasmante, que des expressions machinales de la foi. Or, tout un registre de vocabulaire établit que le mot ἔργον, désigne, dans la pensée de Jacques, une entité spiritualisée, c'est-à-dire une énergie, plutôt qu'une œuvre. Car ce terme est systématiquement opposé à la notion de "désactivation" de l'être (ἀ-εργή)<sup>(46)</sup> ainsi qu'à celle de mort spirituelle: "la foi autarcique, sans les œuvres, n'est que nécrose"<sup>(47)</sup>. D'ailleurs, le système paradoxal instaurant une équivalence entre les termes ἔργον et πνεῦμα ("souffle", "esprit") ne peut trouver une logique que si le premier des deux mots nomme une "énergie" de l'espèce la plus subtile qui soit.

Or, si le substantif d'objet, ἔργον, prend cette signification, en tant qu'énergie mise en œuvre par les "poètes" de la foi chrétienne, le nom d'agent ποιητής doit aussi correspondre à l'activité d'artistes portant, dans une vibration intime, le souffle d'une inspiration, plutôt que de "réalisateurs" appliqués à l'observance de règles de création, fussent-elles édictées par Dieu lui-même. Effectivement, les "poètes du Λόγος", qui se métamorphosent aussi, dans le style de Jacques, en "poètes de l'énergie en actes (ποιητῆς ἔργου)", reçoivent également, par antiphrase, le nom de "poètes de la Loi (ποιητῆς νόμου): "Quand on juge la Loi, on n'en est pas le poète, mais le juge"<sup>(48)</sup>. Le texte opère

<sup>(44)</sup> Jc 2,18.

<sup>(45)</sup> Jc 3,13.

<sup>(46)</sup> Jc 2,20.

<sup>(47)</sup> Jc 2,17 et 2,26.

<sup>(48)</sup> Jc 4,11.

alors un transfert subtil des valeurs du judaïsme à celle du christianisme, par un glissement du sens factuel donné originellement à cette formule en hébreu. En effet, dans toute l'épître, l'auteur évoque l'autorité à laquelle il convient de se référer comme étant la "Loi de la liberté" <sup>(49)</sup>. En conséquence, les "poètes" de la foi dont parle Jacques ne peuvent guère être appelés à l'application d'une norme dans leur mode d'existence ou de célébration. Ce titre commente plus particulièrement, en termes d'esthétique littéraire, le rôle de leur parole, qui ne sachant médire, ni donc détruire, participe ainsi, au contraire, à la diffusion spirituelle d'une Loi en tant que concept ouvert. Ces "poètes" sont placés dans une hiérarchie, sous l'autorité d'un nomothète, Dieu, qui institue cette Loi de liberté. Ils ne créent donc pas, ils n'inventent pas la Loi; ils ne sont pas auteurs. Cependant, leur statut ne limite pas non plus leur action à l'élémentaire exécution de contenus légalistes, indéfinis en l'occurrence. La mise en œuvre qui leur est confiée consiste à promouvoir la Loi, par collaboration, comme serviteurs, et ainsi à la "faire exister" (ποιεῖν), à la porter à la vie, dans son essence, jusque dans le déroulement concret de l'histoire des hommes.

Selon É. Cuvillier: "Être 'créateur' de la parole (...), c'est la laisser désigner jour après jour le visage de notre origine, à savoir justement cette parole de vérité qui nous a engendrés. La laisser dynamiser ce qui en l'homme est du côté du vivant. La laisser désigner en l'homme une autre loi que les lois de ce monde. La laisser désigner la 'loi parfaite', la 'loi de liberté'" <sup>(50)</sup>. L'originalité et la nouveauté de cette définition consistent à dégager la valeur signifiante, significative, plutôt que factuelle, concrètement efficiente, que Jacques donne à la parole poétique en fondant ce sens sur l'observation des vertus propres aux phénomènes littéraires. L'auteur néotestamentaire illustre cette fonction des poètes par une référence juive, plutôt que par une comparaison avec les chœurs grecs inspirés par les Muses. En effet, la figure des prophètes, se profile au détour d'un verset où ils sont présentés comme exemples, eux qui sont des modèles d'endurance et

<sup>(49)</sup> Sur les origines, l'histoire et le sens de cette expression, cf. DIBELIUS, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, 116-120; M. KONRADT, "'Geboren durch das Wort der Wahrheit' — 'gerichtet durch das Gesetz der Freiheit'. Das Wort als Zentrum der theologischen Konzeption des Jakobusbriefes", *Der Jakobusbrief Beiträge zur Rehabilitierung der "Strohernen Epistel"* (Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel 3; Münster 2003) 9-15 et C. BURCHARD, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 88-90.

<sup>(50)</sup> É. CUVILLIER, "Bible et psychanalyse. Quelques éléments de réflexion", *ETR* 82 (2007) 159-177.

qui, surtout parlent dans le nom du Seigneur<sup>(51)</sup>. C'est ainsi qu'ils font la parole, non pas en s'exprimant eux-mêmes, mais en incarnant l'énergie créatrice et l'oralité de Dieu. C'est ainsi que procèdent, de même, les poètes chrétiens de la Loi, qui la portent au jour et qui la "fabriquent", au sens finalement étymologique du terme grec, en transmutant son essence dans leur langage d'hommes.

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En fait, dans son épître, Jacques applique à son propre mode d'expression les principes de conduite généraux qu'il énonce. De la sorte, il est amené à adopter un style sobre et ... "poétique". Ainsi, après avoir prononcé, en termes stricts, une confession de foi et son allégeance au Christ<sup>(52)</sup>, Jacques n'articule plus guère son nom dans des formules marquées par une piété convenue ou dans des effusions grandiloquentes imprégnées de bons sentiments. Mais il invente des formulations qui le désignent à travers les attributs de sa puissance. Le Christ est alors évoqué, notamment, comme la "Parole inspirée, implantée et salvatrice", comme la "Parole de vérité", comme la "Loi parfaite de la liberté", ou comme "douce sagesse"<sup>(53)</sup>. Jacques utilise ces périphrases pour suggérer, comme un poète, l'énergie caractéristique de son Seigneur et pour en communiquer la perception et l'idée.

Ce faisant, il ne perd jamais de vue la perspective critique selon laquelle il se réfère à l'inspiration dramatique des Grecs. Car, dans le spectacle de la tragédie, Aristote discerne deux ressorts fondamentaux: la pitié et la crainte éprouvées devant le sort des héros accablés par la cruauté du destin. Comme en réponse, en retenant la notion de miséricorde et d'intérêt fraternel (ἔλεος) qui doivent se développer entre les hommes<sup>(54)</sup>, mais en substituant à l'idée de peur son opposée, celle de la liberté<sup>(55)</sup>, l'auteur néotestamentaire indique comment l'avènement du Christ fait évoluer la condition humaine. Car le sentiment du tragique attaché à la vie se mue alors en une sensation d'accomplissement de l'existence mortelle, déliée, dans l'amour.

<sup>(51)</sup> Jc 5,10.

<sup>(52)</sup> Jc 1,1.

<sup>(53)</sup> Cf. Jc 1,21; 1,18; 1,25; 3,13.

<sup>(54)</sup> 2,13; 3,17. J. DARRIULAT, *Introduction à la philosophie esthétique* ([www.jdarriulat.net](http://www.jdarriulat.net)) 2007, note que l'identification de la crainte et de la pitié comme ressorts agissant sur la ψυχή à la suite des représentations discursives ou théâtrales constitue un lieu commun dans la pensée grecque.

<sup>(55)</sup> Jc 1,25; 2,12.

En qualifiant le texte de Jacques “d’épître de paille”, Luther porte donc la responsabilité, d’avoir établi, du fait de son autorité, une tradition exégétique ne permettant pas de percevoir toute la profondeur de la spiritualité qui s’y exprime<sup>(56)</sup>. En effet, Jacques ne privilégie pas le faire, par rapport à la foi. Seul l’argument inexact d’une correspondance entre des tournures hébraïques et l’usage du grec fonde une telle compréhension de sa démonstration. En réalité, Jacques joue très subtilement sur les mots, et sur les langues, en quelque sorte. Car, pour lui, “faire” ne signifie pas nécessairement “concrétiser”, mais, selon les connotations grecques du terme, son idéal à la fois poétique et poïétique représente une esthétique de la foi qui doit tenter de refléter la perfection de la grâce dans un souci permanent d’évangélisation. Le poète, alors, ne crée pas comme le ferait un auteur, mais il laisse l’œuvre se développer en lui et à travers lui, comme une forme ouvrant un champ, un espace, un canal à une révélation transcendante ou transcendée. Jacques invite à lire son texte entre les lignes de ses silences où sa pensée se recueille pour trouver son expression vraie. Il faut aussi le lire dans cet intervalle du grec et de l’hébreu où la pensée chrétienne émerge et forge ses concepts, comme à la lisière de ces plaques tectoniques que constituent l’art dramatique inspiré des Grecs d’une part et, d’autre part, la tradition juive de la Loi et des prophètes. “L’esthétique” qui en résulte produit un art poétique (ποίησις) habité par le Christ, si exigeant qu’il investit même les gestes et les actes les plus humbles d’un service diaconal.

Dans l’Épître de Jacques se développe donc une belle spiritualité, à partir d’une réflexion qui ne s’intéresse pas directement à la relation entretenue par la foi et les œuvres, mais plutôt à la question de la manifestation efficiente de la foi, dans tous les registres humains, à des fins de célébration et d’évangélisation. Dans ce contexte, la sobriété du verbe prônée et illustrée par Jacques représente, avant tout, un souci de vérité profonde dans l’expression de la foi, l’originalité d’une “poésie” personnelle constituant, par ailleurs, le meilleur garant de son inspiration intime, sensible, et divine.

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<sup>(56)</sup> Cf. “Préface au Nouveau Testament”, *Luther. Œuvres* (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade; Paris 1999) I, 1052.

## SUMMARY

In the Letter of James the faithful are called upon to become “poets of the λόγος”, that is to say to pass from just hearing the divine word to putting it into action. But this expression does not insist upon the need to make the faith concretely real. It enters into relation with a vocabulary that evokes the energy which must inspire both the words and the actions or the contemplation of human beings and it above all alludes metaphorically, by reference to Greek literary art, to the aesthetic, in fact spiritual, dimension that Christian conduct must take on in order truly to realize itself as such.

## A Brief Discussion of MT Isaiah 24,14-16(\*)

Isaiah 24,14-16 is a problematical text with one commentator deeming its interpretation as “one of the most controversial in chapter 24”<sup>(1)</sup>. This Isaianic text presents three main problems: first, the identification of the *המח* in v. 14a; second, the interpretation of the phrase *צבי לצדיק* in v. 16a; and, third, the function of the “I” statement introduced by *אמר* in v. 16b. This paper will discuss how these difficult matters were resolved in LXX Isa and will show how this Greek document offers insights and corroborates our interpretation of MT Isa 24,14-16.

LXX Isa was a translation from Hebrew into Greek carried out in Egypt, in the second century B.C.E. Although LXX Isa is a translation, previous scholarship has demonstrated that this document has a strong interpretative character<sup>(2)</sup>. As such, this article will approach LXX Isa as a document that offers clues for how Hebrew Isa 24,14-16 was received and read, thus, providing insights for our reading of the text under discussion.

For clarity sake, this article was divided into three sections. The first briefly discusses the three main problems of Isa 24,14-16 named above. The second shows how these problems are dealt with in LXX Isa; the last part builds on the results of the previous section and attempts to show how it provides support for our reading of MT Isa 24,14-16.

(\*) I would like to thank my advisor, Prof. Arie van der Kooij, and the Editorial Board of *Biblica* for their careful reading and valuable suggestions. I take, however, full responsibility for all remaining mistakes that may still appear in this article.

(1) B.S. CHILDS, *Isaiah* (OTL; Louisville, KY 2001) 180.

(2) Cf. I.L. SEELIGMANN, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (FAT 40; Tübingen 2004) 258-293; J. COSTE, “Le texte grec d’Isaie XXV, 1-5”, *RB* 61 (1954) 36-66; J.C.M. DAS NEVES, *A Teologia da Tradução Grega dos Setenta no Livro de Isaías* (Cap. 24 de Isaías) (Lisboa 1973); A. VAN DER KOOIJ, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches*. Ein Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Alten Testaments (OBO 35; Göttingen 1981) 33-60; A. VAN DER KOOIJ, *The Oracle of Tyre*. The Septuagint of Isaiah 23 as Version and Vision (VTSup 71; Leiden 1998).

## 1. MT Isaiah 24,14-16: Problems of Interpretation

a) The Identification of the *הַמָּחֵ*

Scholars usually identify the *הַמָּחֵ* “they” (v. 14a) in two ways. Some are of the opinion that the *הַמָּחֵ* are the ones who were spared from the judgment announced in vv. 1-13<sup>(3)</sup>. These scholars as a rule interpret v. 14 in light of the previous pericope, vv. 1-13, especially of v. 13. For instance, one commentator explained v. 13 as portraying the destruction of the greater part of the people and the sparing of a few just like “when gleanings are left after the grape harvest” (v. 13). According to him, these “few” spared from judgment are the ones “raising their voice” in v. 14a<sup>(4)</sup>. In a more recent commentary, the author identified the *הַמָּחֵ* of v. 14a as the “few” people of v. 6<sup>(5)</sup>.

A second group of scholars view *הַמָּחֵ* “they” as a group of people who wrongly thought the time of their salvation had arrived and, consequently, started praising God in vv. 14-15, 16a<sup>(6)</sup>. For this group, the “they” could be Jews of the Diaspora<sup>(7)</sup> the “inhabitants of the earth”<sup>(8)</sup>, or simply Jews from the sixth century B.C.E.<sup>(9)</sup>. These

<sup>(3)</sup> Cf. W. GESENIUS, *Philologisch-kritischer und historischer Commentar über den Jesaja: 13-39* (Leipzig 1821) 756, 766; T.K. CHEYNE, *The Prophecies of Isaiah. A New Translation with Commentary and Appendices* (London 1884) I, 146; G.B. GRAY, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah: 1-27* (ICC; Edinburgh 1912) I, 415; E. KÖNIG, *Das Buch Jesaja: eingeleitet, übersetzt und erklärt* (Gütersloh 1926) 229, n. 1; E.J. KISSANE, *The Book of Isaiah*. Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text with Commentary (Dublin 1960) I, 273; J. VERMEYLEN, “La Composition Littéraire de L’‘Apocalypse D’Isaïe’ (Is., XXIV-XXVII)”, *ETL* 50 (1974) 15, n. 42; J.A. MOTYER, *The Prophecy of Isaiah. An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL 1993) 202.

<sup>(4)</sup> GESENIUS, *Jesaja*, 756, 766.

<sup>(5)</sup> MOTYER, *Isaiah*, 202.

<sup>(6)</sup> Cf. K. MARTI, *Das Buch Jesaja erklärt* (KHC 10; Tübingen 1900) 185; H. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja* (BKAT X/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 898; D.G. JOHNSON, *From Chaos to Restoration. An Integrative Reading of Isaiah 24-27* (JSOTSup 61; Sheffield 1988) 36, 37; M.A. SWEENEY, *Isaiah 1-39*. With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature (FOTL 16; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 328-329.

<sup>(7)</sup> Cf. e.g., MARTI, *Jesaja*, 185; WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, II, 931, 934.

<sup>(8)</sup> SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 329; J. LOETE, “A Premature Hymn of Praise: The Meaning and Function of Isaiah 24:14-16c in its Present Context”, *Studies in Isaiah 24-27. The Isaiah Workshop - De Jesaja Werkplaats* (eds. H.J. BOSMAN – H. VAN GROL) (Leiden 2000) 233.

<sup>(9)</sup> This proposal was advanced by JOHNSON (*Chaos*, 40). He argued that vv. 14-16a are the expression of praise by Jews who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s retreat from Jerusalem as a sign of their salvation. Against these Jews, the prophet announced that their day of doom was still coming.

scholars usually see no connection between v. 14 and the preceding, interpreting it instead in light of the “I” statement in v. 16b<sup>(10)</sup>.

As it can be seen from this brief summary, there is no consensus regarding the identity of הַמָּה in v. 14a. In the second section of this presentation, we will discuss how LXX Isa solved this problem.

#### b) The Interpretation of צְבִי לַצְדִּיק

The phrase צְבִי לַצְדִּיק “glory to the righteous or Righteous” in v. 16b has also been interpreted in two different ways. Some scholars read צְבִי לַצְדִּיק as a reference to a “righteous people” and translate the phrase as “glory to the righteous”<sup>(11)</sup>. Others interpret צְבִי לַצְדִּיק as a divine epithet and render it as “glory to the Righteous One”<sup>(12)</sup>. The problem is that צְדִּיק is never used in the Hebrew Bible as an independent qualifier for Yahweh. Despite this fact, some commentators argue that similar expressions such as יְהוָה הַצְדִּיק (Exod 9,27), אֵל צְדִּיק וּמוֹשִׁיעַ (Isa 45,21), צְדִּיק יְהוָה (Ps 7,10), אֱלֹהִים צְדִּיק (Ps 11,7), תִּתֵּן יְהוָה וְצְדִּיק (Ps 116,5) come very close to צְדִּיק and, therefore, point to the possibility that the latter could function as an epithet for God<sup>(13)</sup>. Given the divergence in the interpretation of the phrase צְבִי לַצְדִּיק, it will be interesting to see how LXX Isa read it.

#### c) The Function of the “I” Statement

Isa 24,14-15 function as a declaration of praise by an unidentified “they” in v. 14a. V. 16a is usually taken as the continuation of the praise in vv. 14-15. But in v. 16b, the phrase “and I said” וְאָמַר starts the proclamation of doom to a people being described as “treacherous”. The problem is how to conciliate these two apparently paradoxal themes.

An influent type of interpretation holds that vv. 14-16a strongly contrast with the “I” statement in v. 16b. For instance, one scholar took הַמָּה in v. 14 in opposition to the “I” in v. 16 and postulated their identity as the Jews of the Diaspora. He claimed there was a contrast between the view of the הַמָּה and that of the poet. Whereas the former sees the

<sup>(10)</sup> Exceptions are, as far as I could see, JOHNSON (*Chaos*, 40) and LOETE (“Praise”, 233).

<sup>(11)</sup> Cf. e.g., GESENIUS, *Jesaja*, 768; GRAY, *Isaiah*, I, 418; O. KAISER, *Isaiah* 13–39. A Commentary (OTL; Philadelphia, PE 1974) 188; VERMEYLEN, “‘Apocalypse d’Isaïe’”, 14.

<sup>(12)</sup> Cf. e.g., WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, II, 936; SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 329; LOETE, “Praise”, 234.

<sup>(13)</sup> Cf. WILDBERGER, *Jesaja*, II, 936; LOETE, “Praise”, 234, n. 31.



beginning of their salvation (vv. 14-16a), the latter envisions the start of their judgment<sup>(14)</sup>. Thus, this commentator postulated two opposing views in vv. 14-16: that of the Jews (vv. 14-16a) and that of the poet (v. 16b).

This position has developed into what is now called “a disputation pattern”, which sees an opposition between the unidentified “they” (v. 14a) and the “I” statement (v. 16b)<sup>(15)</sup>. The latter is taken as the prophet’s counter-assertion to his opponents’ assertion in vv. 14-15. According to this view, whereas the “they” (v. 14a) see their salvation in the judgment of the earth in vv. 1-13, the prophet (v. 16a) understands that the “they” will not be spared from the judgment in vv. 1-13<sup>(16)</sup>.

The interpretation of vv. 14-23 as a form of the “prophetic disputation pattern” usually involves the following aspects: first, a sharp separation between vv. 14.13; second, the identification of the *הַמָּוֶה* in v. 14 as the *יֹשֵׁב הָאָרֶץ* “inhabitant of the earth” of v. 17; third, the interpretation of *צַדִּיק לְצַדִּיק* as a divine title, has led some scholars to take v. 16a as part of the praise in vv. 14-15; and, fourth, the interpretation of *וְאִמֵּר* in v. 16 as introducing a contrast between the prophet and the praise that preceded it.

Other scholars did not accept the claim that the “I” statement in v. 16b functions as a corrective to the praise of the unidentified “they” in vv. 14-15.16a. One scholar read vv. 14-16a as an expression of salvation for Israel and vv. 16b-20 as a declaration of judgment for the law breakers (cf. Isa 24,5). Likewise, is read the phrase *צַדִּיק לְצַדִּיק* in v. 16a as a reference to “devout Jews” who, in distinction to the law breakers of Isa 24,5, had not broken the law<sup>(17)</sup>.

In a similar vein, another scholar rejected reading vv. 14-18 as

<sup>(14)</sup> Cf. MARTI’s (*Jesaja*, 185) claims: “‘Jene’ sehen die Situation anders an als der Verf” and “Anders urteilt unser Dichter. Nein! sagt er, nicht צַדִּיק, sondern רָדִי, nicht Sieg, sondern *Siechtum*, nicht Anbruch der *Glanzzeit*, sonder Fortschritt der *Krankheit*; wehe mir!” (his italics).

<sup>(15)</sup> Cf. SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 328; LOETE, “Praise”, 231.

<sup>(16)</sup> Thus SWEENEY (*Isaiah*, 329): “vv. 16aβ-20 therefore indicate that YHWH’s actions, praised by the inhabitants of the earth in vv. 14-16aα, will in fact lead to their demise”.

<sup>(17)</sup> Cf. KAISER, *Isaiah*, 188-190: “it is scarcely possible to base upon it the theory that there was a disagreement within Judaism, one group seeing the onset of salvation in a particular event which had already come about, and another whose spokesman insists here that the time of salvation will be preceded by the judgment of the world”.

containing contrasting statements by the people (vv. 14-16a) and the prophet (vv. 16b-18). Instead, he saw a contrast between the צבי לצדיק in v. 16a, the “Jew faithful to the law”, and the “inhabitant of the earth”, the pagan or the pagan Jew in connection with 24,5.6, in v. 17. For him, vv. 14-18a can be divided as follows:

vv. 14-16a:	La communauté des justes
vv. 14-15:	Son attitude: elle glorifie Yahvé
v. 16a:	Son sort: honneur au juste»
vv. 16b-18a:	L’habitant de la terre
v. 16b:	Son attitude: l’infidélité
vv. 17-18a:	Son sort: La chute inévitable <sup>(18)</sup>

In sum, two pictures emerge from the discussion above. In the first one, the “I” statement in v. 16b was interpreted as a “counter-assertion” to the praise of an unidentified “they” in v. 14a. Contrarily, a second position views the “I” statement not as a “counter-assertion” to the “they” of v. 14 but, rather, as an announcement of judgment to a different group of people, that is, to the “faithless” of vv. 16b-18.

Having briefly discussed the main problems regarding the interpretation of Isa 24,14-16, the next section will discuss how LXX Isa dealt with them.

## 2. LXX Isa 24,14-16

### a) The דמה as the ἀσεβῶν in v. 8

LXX starts v. 14 with the phrase οὗτοι φωνῇ βοήσονται “these will cry aloud with the voice”. This phrase is a translation of the Hebrew דמה ישא קולם “they will raise their voice”. The divergences between the Greek and the Hebrew are as follows: first, LXX uses the demonstrative pronoun οὗτοι as a rendition for the Hebrew דמה, which is usually taken as the personal pronoun “they”. Second, the word φωνῇ “voice” corresponds to Hebrew קולם but without the possessive pronoun “their”. Third, the choice of βοάω “to call, shout” as a rendition of נשא קול is somewhat unusual. The phrases נשא קול “to lift the voice” and דמה קול “to raise the voice” appear in Isa 13,2; 37,23; 52,8, where they are rendered by ὑψόω “to lift up”<sup>(19)</sup>. As such, the use of βοάω in 24,14 is important and it will be discussed below.

The second clause of LXX v. 14 reads as οἱ δὲ καταλειφθέντες ἐπὶ

<sup>(18)</sup> Cf. VERMEYLEN, “‘Isaïe’”, 14-16.

<sup>(19)</sup> On Isa 24,14, cf. Symmachus: παρουνσι; Tg. Isa: דמה; Syr: מסי; Vg: *levabunt*. Cf. also DAS NEVES, *Isaías*, 226.

τῆς γῆς εὐφρανθήσονται ἅμα τῇ δόξῃ κυρίου “but the ones left on the earth will rejoice together in the glory of the Lord”. This clause is a translation of Hebrew יִרְנּוּ בְּגִדְּיָהּ יְהוָה “they will rejoice in the majesty of Yahweh”. The Greek relates to the Hebrew in the following respects: the Greek verb εὐφρανθήσονται “they will rejoice” is linked to the Hebrew יִרְנּוּ as εὐφραίνω usually renders יִרְנּוּ in LXX Isa (cf. 12,6; 16,10; 24,14; 26,19; 42,11; 44,23; 49,13; 52,8; 54,1; compare with the same rendition in Deut 32,43; 1 Chr 16,33; Jer 31,12). The expression τῇ δόξῃ κυρίου (LXX Isa 24,14b) is linked to the Hebrew בְּגִדְּיָהּ, which belongs to v. 14c in MT according to its punctuation. It is important to notice that יָמִי is not usually translated with δόξα in LXX Isa, with the exception of Isa 14,11<sup>(20)</sup>. With respect to the phrase οἱ δὲ καταλειφθέντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς “but those who are left on the earth”, one scholar argued that the phrase הַנִּשְׁאַרִים בָּאָרֶץ “the ones left on the earth” was perhaps already present as a “Glosse” in the LXX *Vorlage*, functioning as an explanation of the subject of the הֵמָּה “they” (v. 14a). The translator then used this gloss in his text<sup>(21)</sup>. This suggestion must be rejected as there is no textual evidence for it<sup>(22)</sup>. Finally, the preposition ἅμα “together” is also a plus in the LXX.

Taken as a text of its own, the particle δέ “but” in LXX v. 14b introduces a contrast between the οὗτοι “these” in v. 14a and the οἱ δὲ καταλειφθέντες “the ones left” of v. 14b<sup>(23)</sup>. LXX v. 14 envisions, therefore, two classes of people. As such, it is important to find out the identity of the ones who “cry out” in v. 14a and the “ones who are left on the earth” in v. 14b.

The identity of the οὗτοι “these” in v. 14a is found in the αὐτούς “them” of v. 13c<sup>(24)</sup>. In its own literary context, LXX v. 14 is syntactically connected with v. 13 as v. 14a functions as the apodosis to the protasis in v. 13d<sup>(25)</sup>. Vv. 13b-14a display the same syntactical pattern:

<sup>(20)</sup> The word יָמִי is translated by ἰσχύς “strength” in 2,10,19; by ὑψόω “to elevate, exalt” in 4,2; and by ὕβρις “insolence, pride, arrogance” in 13,11; 16,6; 23,9. It is not clear what word translates, if any, יָמִי in 13,19 and 60,15.

<sup>(21)</sup> Cf. J. ZIEGLER, *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta des Buches Isaías* (ATA XII/3; Münster 1934) 59.

<sup>(22)</sup> Cf. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and 4QIsa<sup>c</sup>, which are both in agreement with MT. References to 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> are based on the edition by D.W. PARRY – E. QIMRON (eds.), *The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>)*. A New Edition (STDJ 32; Leiden 1999) and the ones to 4Q scrolls are based on the edition entitled E. ULRICH *et al.* (eds.), *Discoveries in the Judean Desert. Qumran Cave 4, XV/10* (Oxford 1997).

<sup>(23)</sup> Cf. DAS NEVES, *Isaías*, 226.

<sup>(24)</sup> Cf. DAS NEVES, *Isaías*, 226.

<sup>(25)</sup> Cf. LIEBMANN, “Jesaia 24-27”, 230.

v. 13b:	protasis ἐάν + sub. aor. verb:	καλαμήσῃται
v. 13c:	apodosis ind. fut. verb:	καλαμήσονται
v. 13d:	protasis ἐάν + sub. aor. verb:	παύσῃται
v. 14a:	apodosis ind. fut. verb:	βοήσονται

Vv. 13b-14a are also connected by the theme of agriculture introduced in v. 13b-c: “just as when someone gleans an olive tree, so shall they glean them”. Vv. 13d-14a follow up on the same theme: “just as when the harvest ceases, these will cry aloud”. The connection between v. 14a with v. 13b-c indicates that the cause for the expression of cry in v. 14a is found in the stripping of a group of people referred to as αὐτούς “them” in v. 13c. The question arises as to the identity of the αὐτούς “them” in v. 13c.

In LXX Isa 24, vv. 8-12 form a literary unit. In this unit, there are only two candidates that could be identified with the masc. plural αὐτούς of v. 13c. The first is the masc. plural οἶκοι “houses” of v. 12b. However, οἶκοι “houses” is not the best candidate as the subject of αὐτούς because the latter is described as “crying aloud” in v. 14a. Given that “houses” do not cry aloud, it is almost certain that “houses” is not the subject of αὐτούς. The only second candidate is the masc. plural ἄσεβων “wicked ones” of v. 8b. They are described as being “ashamed” (ἡσχύθησαν in v. 9a) and are called to “wail” (ὀλολύζετε) in v. 11a. It has been correctly argued that the use of βοάω in v. 14a is related to the concept of “wailing” in ὀλολύζετε of v. 11a<sup>(26)</sup>. In view of this, the phrase οὕτως καλαμήσονται αὐτούς “thus they will strip them” is about the stripping of the ἄσεβων “wicked ones” in v. 8b. Whereas v. 13 proclaims the stripping of the ἄσεβων “wicked ones”, v. 14a depicts them as “crying aloud”. Thus, the οὗτοι “these” in v. 14a is best identified as the ἄσεβων “wicked ones” of v. 8b: they “cry aloud” because they were stripped like the stripping of an olive tree.

The second aspect of v. 14 concerns the identity of the “ones left” of v. 14b. The latter must be identified as the “few men” of v. 6d for the same verb καταλείπω “to leave” is found in both places. Thus, v. 14b is an expression of praise by the “few men” (v. 6d) spared from judgment<sup>(27)</sup>.

<sup>(26)</sup> Cf. DAS NEVES, *Isaías*, 226.

<sup>(27)</sup> Cf. DAS NEVES, *Isaías*, 226. About καταλείπω, this word is also found in v. 12a in connection with the feminine πόλεις “cities”. As πόλεις is a feminine noun, it can not be the subject of the masculine participle καταλειφθέντες in v. 14b.

In contrast with the negative “cry” of the ἄσεβων “wicked ones” of v. 14a, the people who are spared from judgment are described as “rejoicing” in the salvation (τῇ δόξῃ κυρίου) of the Lord in v. 14b<sup>(28)</sup>. The concept δόξα is important in LXX Isa 24,14-16 as it appears again in v. 15a (for כבוד) and in v. 15b as ἐνδοξον without any connection with the Hebrew *Vorlage*. Thus, LXX emphasizes in vv. 14b-15b the theme of salvation for the few men of v. 6d who were spared from the judgment.

b) צבי לצדיק as the “godly person”

The phrase ἐλπὶς τῷ εὐσεβεῖ (v. 16a) is connected to the Hebrew צבי לצדיק. The word צבי in Hebrew Isa means either a “gazelle” (Isa 13,14) or “beauty, glory” (Isa 28,4.5). In Isa 24,16, צבי is best translated as “glory”. The LXX translator, however, read צבי in light of Aramaic צבו “will, desire; willingness”<sup>(29)</sup> and translated it with ἐλπίς “hope” (cf. also LXX Isa 28,4.5). The use of ἐλπίς in 24,16a contrasts with δορκάδιον “gazelle” in 13,14 and possibly δόξα in 28,1. The example from Isa 13,14; 28,1 shows that the translator knew the meaning of צבי as “gazelle” or “glory”. As such, the use of ἐλπίς in 24,16a is significant.

The word εὐσεβής “pious; religious” renders צדיק “just, righteous” in Isa 24,16a. Εὐσεβής appears only three more times in LXX Isa. Like 24,16a, εὐσεβής appears twice in 26,7 as a rendition of צדיק, whereas in 32,8 it translates the Hebrew נדיב “noble”. The use of εὐσεβής in Isa 26,7 is important for understanding Isa 24,16. In 26,7, the phrase “the way of the godly (εὐσεβής)” is in sharp contrast with the “ungodly” (ἀσεβής) in v. 10: whereas the way of the “godly” is right (vv. 7-8), the ungodly will not learn “righteousness” and “truth”

<sup>(28)</sup> For the concept of δόξα as “salvation” in LXX Isa, cf. L.H. BROCKINGTON, “The Greek Translator of Isaiah and His Interest in ΔΟΞΑ”, VT 1 (1951) 32, 36.

<sup>(29)</sup> Cf. BROCKINGTON, “ΔΟΞΑ”, 29. W. RUDOLPH, *Jesaja 24-27* (BWA[N]T 62; Stuttgart 1933) 12, proposed that the translator read צבי in light of Hebrew צבה “to want, to wish” — cf. L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER (eds.), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden 1994) III, 997. From now on HALOT. A third proposal was advanced by R.R. OTTLEY, *The Book of Isaiah according to the LXX. Text and Notes* (Cambridge 1906) II, 223, who suggested the translator read צבי in light of צפה meaning in the *pi’el* “to hope for (cf. HALOT, III, 1044). J. FISCHER, *In welcher Schrift lag das Buch Isaiah den LXX vor? Eine Textkritische Studie* (BZAW 56; Giessen 1930) 40, made a similar suggestion to Ottley.

(cf. v. 10). This same contrast between the εὐσεβής “godly” and the ἀσεβής “ungodly” is present in LXX Isa 24,14-16, which introduces the negative cry of the ἀσεβῶν (v. 8) in v. 14a and the proclamation of hope for the εὐσεβής “godly” in v. 16a<sup>(30)</sup>.

As it is clear from the discussion above, LXX Isa interpreted the phrase צַדִּיק לְצַדִּיק in v. 16a not as a divine epithet but as a reference to the godly person. V. 16a proclaims “hope” for the “pious person”. This proclamation of hope contrasts with the announcement of doom for the “ungodly” which follows in v. 16b, as we will discuss below.

### c) The Function of the “I” Statement

LXX Isa 24,16b-c reads as follows: καὶ ἐροῦσιν οὐαὶ τοῖς ἀθετοῦσιν οἱ ἀθετοῦντες τὸν νόμον. NETS translated this phrase as “but those who reject the law will say, woe to those who reject!”<sup>(31)</sup>. Although this translation has the advantage of taking the plural οἱ ἀθετοῦντες “the ones who reject” as the subject of the plural verb ἐροῦσιν “they will say”, it also has one important disadvantage in that “the ones who reject the law” announce doom to the “ones who reject the law”. In our opinion, NETS’s footnote translation is to be preferred: “they will say: woe to those who reject - those who reject the law”. In this way, an unidentified “they” announces “doom” to the law breakers<sup>(32)</sup>.

The relationship between the LXX and the Hebrew is as follows. In v. 16c (LXX 16d), the interjection οὐαὶ is a translation of וְאֵי. The words וְאֵי וְאֵי were not rendered<sup>(33)</sup>. The phrase τοῖς ἀθετοῦσιν (v. 16d’) is a rendition of the ל in MT’s previous clause together with בְּנֵדִים in the present clause<sup>(34)</sup>. So, the Greek οὐαὶ τοῖς ἀθετοῦσιν is a re-

<sup>(30)</sup> The singular εὐσεβής in Isa 24,16 must be taken in a collective sense, designating in general terms the “pious person”. This general use of the singular εὐσεβής is often attested in Sir 11,22; 12,2.4; 13,17; 16,13; 27,11; 33,14; 37,12; and also in PsSol 13,5.

<sup>(31)</sup> Cf. A. PIETERSMA – B.G. WRIGHT (eds.), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under That Title* (IOSCS; Oxford 2007) 842.

<sup>(32)</sup> Cf. *Septuaginta Deutsch’s* translation — *Septuaginta Deutsch*. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung (eds. W. KRAUS – M. KARRER) (Stuttgart 2009) 1250: “Wehe denen, die untreu sind, die dem Gesetz untreu sind!” (italics theirs).

<sup>(33)</sup> Cf. OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 223.

<sup>(34)</sup> Cf. DAS NEVES, *Isaias*, 229; M.H. GOSHEN-GOTTSTEIN, *The Hebrew University Bible*. The Book of Isaiah. The Hebrew University Bible Project (ed. M.H. GOSHEN-GOTTSTEIN) (Jerusalem 1995) *ad loc.*

reading of MT v. 16b-c as אָיִי לַבְּגֵדִים<sup>(35)</sup>. In this sense, the pronominal suffix in לִי (v. 16c) and the verb בָּגְדוּ (v. 16d) were not translated. In v. 16e, the present participle οἱ ἀθετοῦντες renders the verbal adjective בִּגְדִים (36). Finally the expression τὸν νόμον is a plus in the LXX<sup>(37)</sup>, whereas the words בָּגְדוּ/וּבָגְדוּ were not rendered. The importance of the expression “to reject the law” will be discussed below.

In v. 16b-c, the use of the interjection οὐαὶ “woe” characterizes v. 16c as an announcement of judgment to a group of people labeled as τοῖς ἀθετοῦσιν οἱ ἀθετοῦντες τὸν νόμον “to the rejecters — those who reject the law”. The expression τὸν νόμον “the law” has no connection with the Hebrew and it was introduced by the translator as a harmonization with LXX Isa 24,5, where the phrase παρέβησαν τὸν νόμον “they broke the law” is found. The singular νόμος in 24,5 differs from the plural תִּירוֹת/תִּירוֹת “laws” in MT/1QIsa<sup>a</sup> respectively. The use of νόμος in 24,5.16 shows that the translator is concerned with the issue of breaking “the law” in LXX Isa 24 (cf. also the use of ἀνομία in v. 20). LXX 24,16c announces judgment against the “law rejecters:” who are they in LXX Isa 24?

Viewed in the context of LXX Isa 24, the “law rejecters” are to be identified with the ἀσεβῶν of v. 8. This identification is confirmed by the synonymic use of ἀσεβῆς “ungodly” and ἄνομος “lawless” in LXX Isa (cf. Isa 13,11; 33,14; 55,7; compare also with 1 Macc 7,5). As such, whereas v. 16a proclaims “hope” for the εὐσεβῆς, v. 16b-c announce judgment for the ἀσεβῶν. Graphically, v. 16 can be interpreted as follows:

v. 16a:	proclamation of hope for the εὐσεβῆς
v. 16b:	proclamation of judgment for the ἀσεβῶν

To summarize this section, it is important to comment on how Isa 24,14-16 was read in the LXX. First, LXX identified the הַמָּה of v. 14a as the “ungodly” of v. 8, whose cry in v. 14a has a negative tone: they cry out because of their punishment. Second, LXX divided v. 14 into two classes of people: the “ungodly” in v. 14a and the “ones who are left on

<sup>(35)</sup> Cf. E.S. MULDER, *Die teologie van die Jesaja-Apokalipse*. Jesaja 24–27 (Groningen 1954) 15; das NEVES, *Isaías*, 229. LIEBMANN, “Jesaia 24–27”, 236, thought the LXX *Vorlage* had only the interjection אָיִי, which was linked to לַבְּגֵדִים, but this is highly improbable as 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is in line with MT.

<sup>(36)</sup> Against LIEBMANN, “Jesaia 24–27”, 237, who thought that the last three words of MT were lacking in the LXX. The plural present participle ἀθετοῦντες indicates it renders the Hebrew plural participle בִּגְדִים.

<sup>(37)</sup> Cf. OTTLEY, *Isaiah*, II, 223.

the earth” in v. 14b. LXX found the latter in the image of the “gleaning” of v. 13 and in the expression “a few will be left” in v. 6. This second group is portrayed as praising God for their salvation in vv. 14b-15. Third, LXX interpreted the phrase *לְצַדִּיק צִבִּי* not as a divine epithet but as a message of hope to the “godly”. Consequently, v. 16a functions as a proclamation of “hope” to the “righteous people”. And, fourth, LXX Isa took the “I” statement in Hebrew, translated as “they”, not as a prophetic “counter-assertion” to the praise in vv. 14-15 but, rather, as an announcement of doom for another group of people, that is, the law breakers. The latter must be identified with the “ungodly” in v. 8.

### 3. Reading MT Isa 24,14-16

The discussion of how LXX Isa read Isa 24,14-16 offers helpful insights and confirms our reading of this text. As a way of suggestion, this final section will make brief proposals for dealing with the three main problems of Isa 24,14-16 discussed thus far.

#### a) The Identification of the *הַמָּה*

As we have seen, LXX Isa found the subject of the *הַמָּה* “they” in vv. 1-13. Although LXX Isa divided v. 14 into two groups by the insertion of the particle *δέ* “but” in its second clause, such a reading is not supported by MT. To the contrary, MT Isa 24,14 as a whole has only one subject, that is, the unidentified *הַמָּה* “they” of v. 14a. However, LXX is helpful in that it shows the subject of the *הַמָּה* may be found in vv. 1-13.

It is possible to take the subject of *הַמָּה* as “those who have been spared” from the judgment announced in vv. 1-12.13. As previous scholars have noted, the expression “gleanings” implies the sparing of a few from judgment<sup>(38)</sup>. Besides, the phrase “and a few will be left” in v. 6 can be taken at face value indicating the remaining of a few people<sup>(39)</sup>. Taking vv. 13-14 together entails the following aspects:

First, v. 14 does not start a new section but is linked with v. 13. It has been rightly pointed out that the particle *כֹּה* in v. 13 points to an action that lies ahead instead of one that lies in the past. In this way, v. 13 is better taken as the beginning of a new unit<sup>(40)</sup>. And, second, vv.

(38) GESENIUS, *Jesaja*, 766; GRAY, *Isaiah*, I, 415; KISSANE, *Isaiah*, I, 273; VERMEYLEN, “‘Isaïe’”, 15, n. 42.

(39) MOTYER, *Isaiah*, 202.

(40) Cf. KÖNIG, *Jesaja*, 229, n. 1. Cf. also the expression *כִּי כֹה* of v. 13a in Isa 8,11; 18,4; 21,6.16; 30,15; 31,4; 36,16; 45,18; 49,25; 52,3.4; 56,4; 57,15; 66,12,



13-14 are connected by the use of *yiqtol* verbs. The change from *qatal* in v. 12 to *yiqtol* verbs in v. 13 clearly signals the latter as the start of a new unit. And as v. 14 continues to use *yiqtol* verbs, it seems logical to take v. 14 as the continuation of v. 13.

There are two major arguments against taking vv. 13-14 together, one being of a syntactical nature and the other of a thematic one. As for the former, it has been argued that v. 14 “lacks any syntactical link to the preceding material”. As for the latter, it has been noted that there is a change of participants from a speech by Yahweh in v. 13 to the expression of joy by an unidentified “they” in v. 14<sup>(41)</sup>. Against these arguments, it should be noted that v. 14 is syntactically linked with v. 13 by the use of *yiqtol* verbs in both verses. Besides, the use of הֵמָּה “they” points back to v. 13. It should be noted also that the change of participants as signaling the start of a new section is not followed consistently. For instance, one commentator took clause 16a with vv. 14-15<sup>(42)</sup>. The problem is that this clause introduces a new participant with the verbal form “we have heard” in contrast with imperatival calls to praise in v. 15. Although there is a new participant in v. 16a, which has no *waw* connecting it to the preceding verse, v. 16a was still taken together with vv. 14-15.

Some commentators argued that the change of mood from the cessation of merrymaking in vv. 1-13 and the expression of joy makes it difficult to take vv. 13-14 together<sup>(43)</sup>. Against this position it can be argued that the cessation of merrymaking is directed to one group of people and the expression of joy to another. In this sense, vv. 14-15 could still be seen as the expression of joy by those who were spared from the judgment announced in vv. 1-13.

#### b) The Interpretation of צְבִי לְצַדִּיק

About the interpretation of צְבִי לְצַדִּיק in v. 16a, our suggestion is to take it not as a divine epithet but as addressed to the “righteous people” in general as the LXX translator did. Two points support our

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which usually points to the beginning of a new unit or sub-unit. Although כִּי כֹה invariably appears in the stereotyped phrase כִּי כֹה followed by the name of the deity, the only exception being Isa 24,13, from the point of view of syntax and form-criticism the phrase כִּי כֹה usually points to the beginning of a new unit.

<sup>(41)</sup> Cf. SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 328.

<sup>(42)</sup> Cf. SWEENEY, *Isaiah*, 326, 328-329.

<sup>(43)</sup> Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 1-39. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB; New York 2000) 354.

suggestion. First, as it has been noted by several scholars, לצדיק never functions as a divine title in the Hebrew Bible. And, second, לצדיק appears in Isa 26,7, where it clearly refers to a “righteous people:” “the way of the righteous (לצדיק) is smooth; you will straighten the path of the righteous (צדיק)”. As Isa 24-27 form a literary unit, it seems correct to take לצדיק in 24,16a in the same sense of לצדיק in 26,7. The implication of taking צבי לצדיק as directed to a “righteous people” is that v. 16a does not continue the praise in vv. 14-15; it, rather, functions as the proclamation of salvation to a “righteous people”. The LXX interpretation was helpful and confirmed our interpretation of לצדיק as “righteous people” in light of לצדיק in 26,7. It should be clarified, however, that reading לצדיק as “righteous people” in conjunction with 26,7 is not dependent on the LXX; the latter only shows that we arrived at a similar reading as the LXX translator and offers support for our interpretation of MT.

### c) The Function of the “I” Statement

The previous section has shown that LXX Isa 24,16 is a different text from MT 24,16 because the translator read his *Vorlage* in an interpretative way. For the translator, v. 16 functions as a proclamation of hope for the εὐσεβής (v. 16a) whereas v. 16b is a proclamation of doom for the “ones rejecting the law” (v. 16b). In LXX Isa 24, the latter group must be identified with the ἁσεβῶν in v. 8. Although our interpretation of MT below is not dependent on the LXX, the latter does offer a helpful insight to not read the “I” statement in v. 16b as a “counter-assertion” to the praise in vv. 14-15.

The question whether the “I” statement in MT v. 16b should be interpreted as a contrastive clause to what preceded it needs to be answered. As the first section of this paper has shown, some scholars take v. 16b as the “prophet’s counter-assertion” to the praise in vv. 14-16a. Syntactically speaking, this interpretation is problematic as v. 16b lacks the independent personal pronoun “I”. Although some scholars have argued that it would still be possible to take v. 16b as a contrastive clause even without the personal pronoun “I”, it appears that they have a stronger case to make.

As discussed above, in LXX Isa 24, the “ones rejecting the law” in v. 16 are the ἁσεβῶν of v. 8. This is not the case in MT as v. 8 does not refer to the “ungodly” but to the “jubilant”. Instead, the “ones acting faithlessly” in MT v. 16 are best identified with the “breakers of the law” referred to in v. 5. As such, v. 16b represents the prophet’s

proclamation of judgment against the “ones who act faithlessly” mentioned in v. 16c and following. In this sense, v. 16 presents two contrastive messages: first, the proclamation of hope for the righteous in v. 16a and the proclamation of doom for the “ones acting faithlessly” in v. 16b-18.

In sum, MT Isa 24,14-16 can be read as follows:

- vv. 14-15: Praise by the “ones spared from judgment”
- v. 16a: Proclamation of salvation to the “righteous”
- v. 16b: Proclamation of doom to the “ones acting faithlessly”

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\* \*

This contribution discussed three main problems in MT Isa 24,14-16: first, the identification of *הַמֶּחֱשָׁה* in v. 14a; second, the interpretation of the phrase *צַדִּיק לְצַדִּיק* in v. 16a; and, third, the function of the “I” statement in v. 16b. By studying how LXX Isa resolved these issues, this paper has proposed the following aspects as a solution to those three main problems: first, the *הַמֶּחֱשָׁה* in v. 14a should be identified with the “ones who were spared from judgment”. This group is present in the imagery of the “gleanings” in v. 13 and in the phrase “a few will be left” in v. 6; second, the phrase *צַדִּיק לְצַדִּיק* in v. 16a should be taken not as a divine title but as the proclamation of salvation to the righteous person; support for this interpretation was found in the use of the same expression *לְצַדִּיק* in Isa 26,7, where it clearly denotes a “righteous person”. Finally, we have argued that the “I” statement in v. 16b does not function as a “counter-assertion” to the praise in vv. 14-15; it, rather, functions as an announcement of doom to the faithless mentioned in the last part of v. 16 and in the following verses. As such, this paper has argued that there is no need to interpret vv. 14-16 in light of a “prophetic disputation pattern” genre. In this way, the study of the reception of Isa 24,14-16 in LXX Isa provided insights and confirmed our interpretation of three main problems in Isa 24,14-16.

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## SUMMARY

Recent scholarship interprets Isaiah 24,14-16 in light of a “prophetic disputation pattern” genre, which sees the praise in vv. 14-15 as an assertion and the “I” statement in v. 16b as the counter-assertion, thus, correcting the assertion in vv. 14-15. This article seeks to challenge this interpretation and argue that the “I” statement in v. 16b does not need to function as a “counter-assertion” to the praise in vv. 14-15 but, rather, as introducing the proclamation of judgment for the unrighteous (v. 16c).

## The Divine Violence in the Book of Qoheleth

To speak of the relationship between God and violence within Scripture is always difficult. In fact, our notion of “violence” is quite different from that entertained by biblical man<sup>(1)</sup>. For this reason, the exegete has to adopt a double perspective: both the historical context of the texts that he or she is examining and also that in which he or she is living. Then, at the theological level, we must not forget that the biblical authors are writing in a context in which faith in God is something to be taken for granted, even when this faith creates problems for the human person. This is no longer the case for modern humanity which can quite easily distance itself from the very idea of God.

### 1. *The Tears of the Oppressed (Qoh 4,1)*

These observations will serve as introduction to our subject: we ask if it is possible to speak of divine violence in connection with the book of Qoheleth.

Qoh 4,1 is a useful starting point: in fact, it is a passage which is not infrequently given as an example of Qoheleth's pessimism<sup>(2)</sup>:

“Again<sup>(3)</sup> I saw  
all the oppressions that are practised under the sun.  
And behold, the tears of the oppressed,  
and they had no one to comfort them!  
On the side<sup>(4)</sup> of their oppressors there was power,  
and there was no one to comfort them” (Qoh 4,1).

<sup>(1)</sup> In this connection, cf. the Acts of the XXXIX Settimana Biblica Italiana, L. MAZZINGHI (ed.), *La violenza nella Bibbia, RicStoBib* 20 (2008), with numerous articles and an abundant bibliography.

<sup>(2)</sup> Cf., for example, F. CRÜSEMANN, “Die unveränderbare Welt: Überlegungen zur ‘Krisis der Weisheit’ beim Prediger (Kohélet)”, W. SCHOTTRUFF – W. STEGEMANN (eds.), *Der Gott der kleinen Leute. Sozialgeschichtliche Bibelauslegungen* (1979) I, 80-104. For a detailed analysis of this passage with a further bibliography, cf. F. BIANCHI, “‘Essi non hanno chi li consoli’ (Qo 4,1)”, *RivBibIt* 40 (1992) 299-307; and also A. PASSARO, “Non c’è chi li consoli. La violenza nei libri sapienziali”, *La violenza nella Bibbia*, 95-110, centered precisely on the theme of violence. Cf. also J.-J. LAVOIE, “De l’inconvénient d’être né. Étude de Qohélet 4,1-3”, *SR* 24 (1995) 297-308.

<sup>(3)</sup> The verb וַיִּרְאֵהוּ is to be understood here in an adverbial sense.

<sup>(4)</sup> M. FOX, *A Time to Tear Down and a Time to Build Up. A Rereading of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI 1999) 218, reads בַּיָּד instead of בְּיָד and translates:

We consider the text as part of a tiny literary unit (4,1-3) which describe five moments in human relationships<sup>(5)</sup>. The text opens with an observation of an experiential character introduced by the verb רָאָה ("to see"), which denotes, rather, to examine, to value, to consider in the light of one's own experience<sup>(6)</sup>. The object of Qoheleth's observation is every kind of oppression (עֲשָׂקִים)<sup>(7)</sup> which is carried out in the world, among humans. This oppression originates precisely from humanity itself<sup>(8)</sup>. Like the sages of Israel, Qoheleth knows very well that violence and force prevail in the world; different forms of oppression are, therefore, a constant drama in the history of humanity. The root עֲשָׂק recurs three times in the same verse, in three different forms, so as to render it the basic theme of our text. עֲשָׂק refers to oppression of a socio-economic kind. This is confirmed by the prophetic vocabulary where עֲשָׂק regards the expropriation of land on the part of the very rich (cf. especially Amos 3,9; 4,1; Hos 5,11; Mic 2,2; Ezek 22,29)<sup>(9)</sup>. The root appears again in two, probably late, psalms (Pss 103,6; 146,7) where it indicates, in fact, that particular category of people, "the oppressed", for whom God will effect justice.

Qoh 4,1 goes well beyond the (typically sapiential) observation of a situation of misery and oppression, without expressing a judgement. Qoheleth takes note of it, acting thus in the characteristic way of the sages of Israel who want to understand reality before making a

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"their oppressors possess power"; but it is an unconvincing emendation, not supported by any textual witness.

<sup>(5)</sup> For this subdivision, cf. BIANCHI, "Essi non hanno chi li consoli", 301-302; cf. also V. D'ALARIO, *Il libro di Qohelet. Struttura letteraria e retorica* (RivBSuppl 27; Bologna 1992) 116-119. The 4,1-3 is a transitional unity inside a major section — Qoh 3,16-6,9.

<sup>(6)</sup> On this use of the verb רָאָה, cf., in particular, P. VAN HECKE, "The Verbs רָאָה and שָׁמַע in the Book of Qoheleth. A Cognitive-Semantic Perspective", A. BERLEJUNG — P. VAN HECKE, *The Language of Qoheleth in its Context* (FS. A. Schoors) (Leuven — Paris — Dudley, MA 2007) 203-220; especially 219-220. Van Hecke prefers to give the verb רָאָה in 4,1 the more precise sense of "examine".

<sup>(7)</sup> The term עֲשָׂקִים, from the root עֲשָׂק, "to oppress", should not be considered as a participle but as an abstract substantive, as "a nominal formation used for abstract nouns"; cf. A. SCHOORS, *The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words. A Study of the Language of Qoheleth* (Louvain 2004) II, 345.

<sup>(8)</sup> The *niphal* of the verb עֲשָׂק has a predicative function here: "the oppressions that are perpetrated"; cf. SCHOORS, *The Preacher Sought*, II, 83-84.

<sup>(9)</sup> With regard to the social context which could be behind Qoh 4,1, H.W. HERTZBERG, *Der Prediger* (Gütersloh 1963) 113, speaks of "Latifundienwesen, harte Steuergesetzgebung, Vorrechte bestimmter Klassen".

judgement on it, but in fact, he arrives at a deeper and more personal observation: with *והנה*, “and behold”, Qoheleth draws attention to something new, the tears of the oppressed, caused by the power and the violence (*כח*) practised by the oppressors<sup>(10)</sup>. This is the true heart of his observation.

## 2. “And they had no one to comfort them”

Facing the tears of the oppressed and the presence of the oppressors, Qoheleth adds, twice, his own comment: *וְאִין לָהֶם מְנַחֵם* — “And there was no one to comfort them”. There is no plausible reason to eliminate or correct the second occurrence of this expression as some do, suggesting the reading of *מְנַקֵּם*, “a vindicator”, instead of *מְנַחֵם*, “comforter”, along the lines of the *Vulgate* and the *Targum*<sup>(11)</sup>. The Masoretic text is secure; the repetition is to be explained in the light of the use of synonymous parallelism which gives the text notable rhetorical force. The repetition also anticipates what is going to be said later in 4,4 with regard to a man’s envy of his neighbour<sup>(12)</sup>.

The expression *וְאִין לָהֶם מְנַחֵם* is typical of Qoheleth but similar expressions are to be found in Lam 1,2 (*אִין לָהּ מְנַחֵם*); 1,9.17 (*אִין מְנַחֵם לָהּ*); 1,21 (*אִין מְנַחֵם לִי*). In the book of Lamentations, the personified Jerusalem laments over the suffering of the Exile and the absence of anyone to comfort her. In these texts it is not just a question of the absence of human comforters — all her one-time friends have become enemies — as for example in Ps 69,21, but the comforter of whose absence she is most aware is the Lord even if people are still able to hope in the mercy of the Lord<sup>(13)</sup>.

The verb *נָחַם* is very frequent in the texts of the so-called Deutero-Isaiah<sup>(14)</sup>, a fact rarely taken into account by commentators on Qoheleth. One thinks, in particular, of Is 51,12, where the Lord says to

<sup>(10)</sup> The noun *כח* refers to the violence of the oppressors only in this place in the Hebrew Bible. Cf. SCHOORS, *The Preacher Sought*, II, 358.

<sup>(11)</sup> Cf. a summary discussion of the problem in SCHOORS, *The Preacher Sought*, II, 365.

<sup>(12)</sup> Cf., for example, the proposal by L. SCHWIENHORST – SCHÖNBERGER, *Kohelet* (HThK/AT; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 2004) 292.

<sup>(13)</sup> Cf. U. BERGES, *Klagelieder* (HThKAT 21A; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 2002) 99-100.

<sup>(14)</sup> For the verb *נָחַם*, cf. H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, “נָחַם”, *TWAT* V, 366-383 and, again, SCHOORS, *The Preacher Sought*, II, 364-365. We should note that the verb *נָחַם* used in the *Pi* normally governs the accusative and not the *lamed*, as happens in Qoh 4,1 and in the passages quoted from Lamentations.

the Israelites: “I, I am he that comforts you (מַחֲמִיכָה)”. Deutero-Isaiah opens, in Isa 40,1, with the double repetition of the verb: “Comfort, comfort my people”; cf., further, Isa 49,13; 51,3; 51,19; 52,9; 54,11 and also Isa 66,13. In all these examples, God himself is presented as the comforter of Israel, thus providing one of the basic themes of the text of Isa 40–55.

When, therefore, Qoheleth repeats twice that “there is no comforter”, he is thinking, not so much of the absence of human comforters, but, as in the texts of Lamentations and in polemic with the prophetic vision of Isa 40–55, of the absence of God who is held to be a comforter of the oppressed. It is God, then, who is not open to their appeal<sup>(15)</sup>. This is not the first time that Qoheleth has opposed the prophetic optimism of Isa 40–55; suffice it to think of Qoh 1,9, “there is nothing new under the sun” which, in many ways, constitutes a criticism of the “new thing” announced by Deutero-Isaiah<sup>(16)</sup>.

The ancient interpretations of Qoh 4,1 can help us to better understand this text. The LXX respects the Masoretic text substantially; Jerome interprets the passage in a literal sense, without attenuating its scandalous implications, although he does not refer to God the idea of an absent comforter<sup>(17)</sup>. However, the Targum understands the risk of this interpretation and reads Qoh 4,1 in an eschatological key: “And I further observed all the violence which was done to the righteous and how they were oppressed in this world under

(15) F. BIANCHI (“Essi non hanno chi li consoli”) is, to my knowledge, the first to defend this thesis convincingly (the study by A. Passaro already cited follows his example); prior to Bianchi, cf. some allusions in E. GLASSER, *Le procès du bonheur par Qohélet* (LD 61; Paris 1970) 7, and also P. SACCHI, *Ecclesiaste* (Roma 1971) 153–154 and D’ALARIO, *Il libro di Qohélet*, 117 (“non è improbabile che Qo ponga qui un problema di teodicea”); many commentators do not take into any account the idea that, in 4,1 Qoheleth is referring to God.

(16) Cf., in this connection, L. MAZZINGHI, “Qoheleth and Enochism: a Critical Relationship”, *The Origins of Enochic Judaism*. Proceedings of the First Enoch Seminar, Univ. of Michigan, Sesto Fiorentino (Italy) June 19–23, 2001; *Henoch* 24 (2002) 157–168.

(17) “Et conversus sum ego, et vidi universas calumnias quae fiunt sub sole et ecce lacrymae eorum qui calumniam sustinent, et non est qui consoletur eos, et in manibus calumniantium eos fortitudo: et non est eis consolator”. Segue alla traduzione il commento di Girolamo: “Et ecce hi, qui injuste a potentioribus opprimuntur, lacrimis, quas solum habere in calamitatibus licet, rei invidiam protestantes, consolatorem non quaeunt reperire. Et quo maior miseria sit, et inconsolabilis dolor, calumniatores vident in suis iniquitatibus fortiores. Et haec est causa quod non valeant consolari” (*Comm. in Eccl.*, PL 23, 1098).



the sun by the hand of their oppressors and there is none to speak to them comforting words, and there is none to redeem them from the hand of their attackers with a strong hand and with power and there is none to comfort them”<sup>(18)</sup>. In this way, this ancient Jewish translation wishes to avoid a problematic reading of Qoheleth but indirectly confirms the original sense of the passage.

Can one suppose then that Qoheleth holds God responsible for the violence present in the world? Qoheleth does not blame God directly for his indifference in the face of violence as Job does (see for example Job 24,12); rather he limits himself to observing something born from experience, the presence of violence in the world and, alongside it, the, at least apparent, absence of divine judgement on this violence. Qoheleth is not concerned with debating with God or calling him to account as Job does.

Faced with the reality of violence and oppression, Qoheleth does not seem to be aware of the presence of a God who comforts the oppressed as, by contrast, Ben Sira is in a not too different context, in which he perhaps intends to reply to Qoheleth: “(God) will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged. He will not ignore the supplication of the fatherless nor the widow when she pours out her story” (Sir 35,16-17). Ben Sira’s reply is certainly more reassuring. We do not find any theodicy in Qoheleth, at least in the way that we come across it in Ben Sira.

While Qoheleth twice emphasises the absence of a divine comforter, his stress suggests that there ought to be such a comforter. As is the case elsewhere in the book, and especially in the controversial passage of Qoh 8,11-14 (cf. *infra*), “the absurdity consists of this contradiction between the principle of justice which is in the human mind and the widespread injustice which is seen in the world”<sup>(19)</sup>.

### 3. *The Figure of God in Qoheleth: a distant God?*

Is the God of Qoheleth the same as the God of the traditional faith of Israel? We know that Qoheleth never speaks of the biblical YHWH – only אלהים (H) appears in his book<sup>(20)</sup>.

<sup>(18)</sup> Cf. P.S. KNOBEL, *Targum of Qoheleth* (The Aramaic Bible 15; Edinburgh 1991) 30. Also the *Midrash Qo. R.* rereads our passage in an eschatological key.

<sup>(19)</sup> V. D’ALARIO, “L’assurità del male nella teodicea del Qohelet”, *Initium Sapientiae* (FS. F. Festorazzi) (ed. R. FABRIS) (Bologna 2000) 190.

<sup>(20)</sup> For a general introduction to the problem of God in Qoheleth, cf. L. MAZZINGHI, *Ho cercato e ho esplorato*. Studi sul Qohelet (Bologna 2009) 409-432.

The God of Qoheleth can be considered as the originator (“Urheber”) of a world that has become problematic; the *initiator mundi* has become the *Deus absconditus*; this being so, in the face of the totally arbitrary nature (“Willkür”) of the divine behaviour in relation to man, there remains only resignation<sup>(21)</sup>. According to this viewpoint, the text of 4,1 can thus be readily understood as the affirmation of a sage who actually holds God directly responsible for the violence and evil that is in the world.

The God that Qoheleth presents us can be considered as a God who is absolutely sovereign, a radicalisation of a theme typical in the traditional theology of Israel. In relation to this God, there would be no room for any personal relationship. God no longer speaks in history. However, the biblical spirit which animates Qoheleth is revealed in his refusal to give meaning to a life which is not a place of encounter with God. The result is that Qoheleth is obliged to live not without God, but without a saving God<sup>(22)</sup>. Qoheleth would not be an atheist, but his God would no longer be the God of Israel’s faith. The possibility of having some kind of personal relationship with this God has disappeared. The only thing possible is a fearful respect towards an incomprehensible despot<sup>(23)</sup>.

In his classic work *Wisdom in Israel*, G. von Rad holds that in the book of Qoheleth “a thorough, rational examination of life is unable to find any satisfactory meaning; everything is “vanity”. God determines every event. Man is unable to discern these decrees, the “work of God”

(21) Cf. H.P. MÜLLER, “Wie sprach Qohälät von Gott?”, VT 18 (1968) 507-522. That the God of Qoheleth is a *Deus absconditus* is a very widespread view; according to A.A. FISCHER, *Skepsis oder Furcht Gottes?* Studien zur Komposition und Theologie des Buches Kohelet (Berlin – New York 1997) 245-250, this is precisely the *hermeneutischer Schlüssel* of Qoheleth’s theology. Cf., also, V. D’ALARIO, “Struttura e teologia del libro del Qohelet”, *Il libro del Qohelet*. Tradizione, redazione, teologia (eds. G. BELLIA – A. PASSARO) (Milano 2001) 272.

(22) “Non sans Dieu, mais sans un Dieu de salut”: L. GORSEN, “La cohérence de la conception de Dieu dans l’Ecclésiaste”, ETL 46 (1970) 323. Cf. also on p. 313: “On pourrait résumer la théologie de l’Ecclésiaste en disant qu’elle nous présente un Dieu souverain à l’extrême”.

(23) Analogous conclusions, but with different premises, are the interesting and provocative theses of E. BICKERMAN, *Four Strange Books of the Bible*. Jonah – Daniel – Kohelet – Esther (New York 1967). In the face of his God, the sage, Qoheleth, in reality a rich but disillusioned Jew, reduces all his religiosity to a disenchanted warning to be on one’s guard; in fact, one cannot rely on this God at all...!

in the world”<sup>(24)</sup>. Thus “man never achieves a dialogue with his surroundings, still less with God. Is he even still a “Thou”? (...) Koheleth no longer poses Job’s questions as to whether this God is still his God”<sup>(25)</sup>. As von Rad had just observed a short time before, “the consequences of this conviction — measured against the confidence of the old wisdom — are catastrophic”<sup>(26)</sup>. The God of Qoheleth, therefore, would be no longer the guarantor of the ethical order; in fact, the world appears as only a hopeless chaos<sup>(27)</sup>.

More recently, A. Schoors has returned to this question, stressing that “dark side” of God in the book of Qoheleth. Schoors<sup>(28)</sup> also holds that the God of Qoheleth is very different from the biblical YHWH: “the source of this fatalistic aspect may not be God *in se*, but human incapacity to fathom God’s working; however, it has changed the image of God into that of an almost impersonal deity who acts in a fatalist way. This God is distant and cool (...) he is the maker of a problematic world, a *Deus absconditus*”<sup>(29)</sup>. Thus the very possibility of any kind of theodicy is radically excluded; the presence of God in the world is no longer a salvific presence. To put it simply, the God of Qoheleth is beyond all imaginable human discussion. We must ask if such a God is still “God” in the biblical sense of the term. Schoors seems to doubt it.

But, if for Qoheleth God (or “the God”) is not the just creator, the providential guide of the world and history, but rather a hidden, impersonal, distant and capricious deity whose power cannot be

<sup>(24)</sup> G. VON RAD, *Weisheit in Israel* (Neukirchen – Vluyn 1970) = *Wisdom in Israel* (London 1972) 227.

<sup>(25)</sup> *Wisdom in Israel*, 233.

<sup>(26)</sup> *Wisdom in Israel*, 232.

<sup>(27)</sup> “Es gibt nur ein hoffnungsloses Chaos”; so A. LAUHA, *Kohelet* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 16-17.

<sup>(28)</sup> Cf. A. SCHOORS, “Theodicy in Qoheleth”, *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, (eds. A. LAATO – J.C. de MOOR) (Leiden 2003) 375-409 and, again, by the same author “God in Qoheleth”, *Schöpfungsplan und Heilsgeschichte* (FS E. Haag) (eds. R. BROSHDSCHIEDT – T. MENDE) (Trier 2002) 251-270; cf., also, his *The Preacher Sought*, II, 93-111.

<sup>(29)</sup> *The Preacher Sought*, II, 110. And again: “God is endowed with unlimited power but his activity discloses no traces of justice, mercy or even wisdom Qoheleth does not accuse God, neither does he defend him. And the reason is that this is beyond his capacities, for man cannot fathom God”, “Theodicy in Qoheleth”, 406.

challenged, how is that God really different from the tyrants of the earth? Is he responsible for all the violence which is in the world<sup>(30)</sup>?

#### 4. *Criticism of God or of the God of Tradition?*

In texts such as Qoh 8,11-14 and 9,1-3 Qoheleth, as Crenshaw remarks, “quotes traditional belief and then exposes it in the harsh light of experience. In this case, however, he comes perilously close to blaming God for the spread of wickedness (...). Qoheleth considers the resulting situation totally absurd”<sup>(31)</sup>. And yet, in contrast with Schoors, Crenshaw recognizes that, while Qoheleth “offers no defence of divine justice”, at the same time he provides an indirect theodicy: “the problem is no longer God; it has now become the limits of rational discourse about deity. Theodicy, then, is insoluble, a mystery that is embedded in the unfathomable mystery of God”<sup>(32)</sup>.

The observations of Crenshaw in particular allow us to go further into two important aspects to which he does not give sufficient weight.

In the first place, Qoheleth appears, throughout along his book, to be a critic of the traditional doctrine of Israel. In Qoh 8,11-14, for example, Qoheleth argues against the traditional idea of retribution (or better, the so-called *Tun-Ergehen-Zusammenhang*). Qoh 8,11-14 is a difficult and disputed text, but it is sufficiently clear that the idea of “fearing God” bound up with rewards and punishments is radically contested here by Qoheleth<sup>(33)</sup>. When, therefore, Qoheleth writes that “sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily” (8,11), he is not indirectly accusing God of being responsible for the violence and injustice in the world. Rather he is challenging the existence of the retributive principle such as it was conceived in Israelite tradition. For him, “fearing God” is something that must be separated from any notion of reward or punishment, something, thus, totally free.

<sup>(30)</sup> “This mystery of the remote and hidden God, the *deus otiosus*, including both divine nature and activity, led to Qoheleth’s loss of confidence in beneficent Providence...”; L.G. PERDUE, *The Sword and the Stylus. An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires* (Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge 2008) 253.

<sup>(31)</sup> J.L. CRENSHAW, *Defending God. Biblical Responses to the Problem of Evil* (New York 2005) 168.

<sup>(32)</sup> CRENSHAW, *Defending God*, 169.

<sup>(33)</sup> For this topic, cf., now, L. MAZZINGHI, “Esegesi ed ermeneutica di un libro difficile: l’esempio di Qo 8,11-14”, *Biblical Exegesis in Progress. Old and New Testament Essays* (eds. J.N. ALETTI – J.L. SKA) (AnBib 176; Rome 2009) 173-207.

In Qoh 9,1-3, the concept of the existence of a retributive principle is debated<sup>(34)</sup>. So when Qoheleth seems to dispute the very action of God, his criticism is in fact addressed to the God of tradition, just as happens in the case of the polemic of Job in confronting the God of his three “friends”.

There is, however, a second aspect of Crenshaw’s thesis which must be discussed: the problem for Qoheleth is not so much God in himself but rather human discourse about God. We must note at this point that God is never absent from Qoheleth’s horizon, but he is rather an incomprehensible God who eludes every human attempt at comprehension. “To seek and explore” what God accomplishes in the world is thus a task which God himself entrusts to humanity, a difficult task (Qoh 1,13), a task without end (Qoh 3,10-11), a task which not even the sage can bring to conclusion (Qoh 8,16-17). More precisely: we find ourselves faced with the problem of human speech about God which is always limited.

In Qoheleth, what is said about God is always ambivalent: God is the giver of life and joy, he is the creator, but he is also a character who is distant and incomprehensible<sup>(35)</sup>. Authors such as Schoors, Crenshaw and Perdue limit themselves to stressing this obscure side of God, forgetting that, for Qoheleth, what comes into question is neither the existence of God nor his justice but rather the breach which humanity discovers between the justice of God and his - with the suffering and absurdity of human life as revealed by experience. The problem is not God, therefore, but the limitation of human beings. We thus find ourselves before a problem of an epistemological rather than theological character<sup>(36)</sup>.

Qoheleth puts the greatest emphasis on divine transcendence. A symptomatic text is Qoh 5,2: “God is in heaven, and you upon earth”. Qoheleth’s God resembles, in many respects, the description of the Ptolemaic monarch of Qoheleth’s times. The attitude which Qoh 8,2-5 recommends with regard to the power of the king does not seem at first

<sup>(34)</sup> On this text, cf. J.Y.S. PAKK, *Il canto della gioia in Dio. L’itinerario sapienziale espresso dall’unità letteraria in Qohelet 8,16-9,10 e il parallelo di Gilgamesh Me. III* (Istituto Universitario Orientale; Napoli 1996) 142-153.

<sup>(35)</sup> Cf. F. BACKHAUS, ‘*Denn Zeit und Zufall trifft sie alle*’. Studien zur Komposition und zum Gottesbild im Buch Qohelet (BBB 83; Frankfurt a. M. 1993) 352-384.

<sup>(36)</sup> Cf., for example, A. SCHELLENBERG, *Erkenntnis als Problem. Qohelet und die alttestamentliche Diskussion um das menschliche Erkennen* (OBO 188; Göttingen 2002) 169-172.

sight very different from that suggested in 7,13-14 with regard to relations with God: "man cannot discuss with the one who is stronger than he" (6,10).

Such a presentation of God's transcendence and of his absolute power looks like an implicit criticism of God's conduct: arbitrary, despotic and, in the end, violent. More probably, what appears to us as an act of violence appeared to Qoheleth as the recognition of the appropriate *status* of creatures. In juxtaposing the figure of God and that of the Ptolemaic monarch, there is, in the language of Qoheleth a good dose of irony<sup>(37)</sup>. For Qoheleth, the king is, in fact, a capricious despot from whom it is necessary to keep one's distance (cf., again, 8,2-5, but also 10,20). Human authority is often rapacious (10,16-17), even stupid (10, 6-7); but is God really like this? Or is Qoheleth rather criticising precisely the wish to judge God according to wholly human criteria? Once again, then, an epistemological problem rather than a theological one.

I would claim that, in emphasising the divine transcendence, Qoheleth really wants to highlight God's freedom, as occurs in texts like Qoh 2,25; 3,14; 7,14 where God is described as one who acts on the basis of criteria which can seem even arbitrary to men but which are not necessarily so *a priori*. Even terms like *מְקַדֵּשׁ* or *פֶּנֶה*, which could bring to mind a God exactly like the Greek Fate, are used, in reality, to safeguard the absolute divine freedom<sup>(38)</sup>.

### 5. *The God of Qoheleth in his historical context*

What Qoheleth writes in 4,1 becomes clearer in the light of the book's historical context, that of the third century B.C. In this period Israel's reflection on the problem of evil becomes especially pressing<sup>(39)</sup>. The text of Qoh 4,1 shows how Qoheleth is engaged in an authentic and specific debate on the political, economic and social condition of Judaea between the fourth and the third century BC,

(37) On irony in the book of Qoheleth, cf., above all, F.J. BACKHAUS, "Kohélet und die Ironie", *BZ* 101 (2000) 29-55 and R. VIGNOLO, "La poetica ironica di Qohelet. Contributo allo sviluppo di un orientamento critico", *Teologia* 25 (2000) 217-240.

(38) On this aspect, cf. V. D'ALARIO, "Liberté de Dieu ou destin? Un autre dilemme dans l'interprétation du Qohélet", *Qoheleth in the Context of Wisdom* (ed. A. SCHOORS) (Leuven 1998) 456-463.

(39) Cf. P. SACCHI, *Storia del Secondo Tempio* (Torino 1994) 302-329.

relevant precisely to the problem of evil and, consequently, to that of the justice of God<sup>(40)</sup>.

The social context of Qoheleth is different from that of the prophets, but this kind of oppression is to be observed in several texts which describe injustice and human greed (cf. Qoh 5,12-16; 6,7; 7,12; 8,9-10; 10,16-17 and, especially, 5,7-11); it is the context of the “new economy” typical of the Ptolemaic period in which the new rich, often great landowners, create new forms of oppression at the expense of the very poor<sup>(41)</sup>.

Ps 103,6, a text that is difficult to date but which is probably late, states that God “works justice for all who are oppressed (הַעֲשִׂיקִים)”. Evoking the key moments in the history of salvation, the psalmist professes his faith in the justice of God in his dealings with the oppressed.

In Job 35,9-10<sup>(42)</sup> Elihu states that it could be that the oppressed, who weep over their oppression (הַעֲשִׂיקִים), never ask themselves where God is and do not turn to him. In other words, for Elihu, those who have no faith in the divinity do not have the right to call upon him; however, the divine freedom cannot be a matter for debate, not even in view of the existence of oppression and violence.

Qoheleth probably knows these texts and is taking up a different position in the face of the problem of violence. In the light of the changed economic, political and social situation which challenged Jewish society at the beginning of the Hellenistic period, Qoheleth is deepening the analysis of the relationship which exists between human injustice and violence and the activity of God. To Qoheleth, the problem appears to be a good deal more serious than it had seemed to the author of the speech of Elihu or to the psalmists, and cannot be resolved by a simple appeal to faith in a God who will surely do justice for the oppressed. Experience shows that such a divine intervention cannot be seen “under the sun”.

<sup>(40)</sup> BIANCHI, “Essi non hanno chi li consoli”, 305-307.

<sup>(41)</sup> Cf., for example, A. SCHOORS, “Qoheleth: a Book in a Changing Society”, *OTE* 9 (1996) 68-87; L. MAZZINGHI, *Ho cercato e ho esplorato*, 67-76; J.L. CRENSHAW, “Qoheleth in Historical Context”, *Bib* 88 (2007) 285-299.

<sup>(42)</sup> The debate on Job 32-37 is far from being concluded; for a detailed exposition of the reasons which lead to the denial that Elihu’s discourse belongs to the primary stratum of the book of Job, cf. G. BORGONOVO, *La notte e il suo sole. Luce e tenebre nel Libro di Giobbe. Analisi simbolica* (AnBib 135; Roma 1995) 69-78. For the opposite position, cf. N.C. HABEL, *The Book of Job* (OTL; Philadelphia, PA 1985) 35-37.

In connection with the historical context in which Qoheleth is writing, we may recall that the third century is, in fact, the period in which the Enochic tradition was beginning to develop in an ever more expansive way. In this perspective, Qoheleth's emphasis on the transcendence and absolute freedom of God is to be understood as the attempt by Qoheleth to give a polemical reply to a new vision of reality, that of Enoch, in which what happens on earth is the reflection of what happens in heaven. For Qoheleth, instead, there is no kind of relationship between the two worlds (cf. again the text of Qoh 5,2).

In the Enochic tradition, the theme of violence is particularly present; cf., for example, 1Hen 91,18:

"and now I will tell you, my children, and I show you the paths of righteousness and the paths of violence, and I shall show you them again, that you may know what is coming (...) Do not walk in the paths of violence, for they will perish forever (...)"<sup>(43)</sup>.

First of all, there is the "historical" violence actually undergone by the community to which the authors of these works belong. Then there is a metahistorical violence which is the real cause of the historical violence, or else the fallen angels who have taught humanity the ways of violence. The account in *Book of Watchers* (1 Hen 8,1; 9,1) tells us about the angels who instruct men in war. Finally, there is an eschatological, divine violence which will eliminate the first two forms of violence root and branch and re-establish peace; cf., for example, 1 Hen 91,8-9: "and in these days violence will be cut off from its roots and the roots of iniquity together with deceit; and they will be destroyed from under the heaven (...)". The re-establishment of justice can come only from God; every human solution is impracticable<sup>(44)</sup>.

Qoheleth also observes bitterly the existence of an "historical" violence, of the oppressed and their oppressors, but refuses to search for its possible metahistorical causes. For him, neither the intermediate worlds nor the fallen angels exist. His observations are confined to what is "under the sun".

The absence of a divine comforter can therefore also be better understood in the context of an anti-Enochic polemic which is actually typical of the entire book of Qoheleth. Both Qoheleth and Enochism

<sup>(43)</sup> For the text of 1 Hen cf. G.W.E. NICKELSBURG, *1 Enoch* (Minneapolis, MN 2000) I, 409.

<sup>(44)</sup> For all this, cf. S. CHIALÀ, "Violenza e giudizio divino nella letteratura enochica", *La violenza nella Bibbia*, 111-122; as far as I am aware, this is the only study devoted to this specific theme.



have a shared interest in knowledge and in the problem of evil. For Qoheleth, however, the Enochic solution is impracticable. The criticism which he brings to bear against the Enochic beliefs borders on irony. No eschatological salvation is conceivable; no heavenly revelation can be invoked; no form of life after death can be imagined (cf., especially, Qoh 3,18-21)<sup>(45)</sup>.

For Qoheleth, in particular, as a solution to the problem of evil and violence one cannot invoke the presence of a just God who will judge violence itself and eliminate it in the times to come with a radical solution. For Qoheleth, the future simply cannot be known (cf., for example, Qoh 8,7; 10,14) and the action of God cannot be criticized by man.

For Qoheleth, as we said before, oppression and violence cannot be explained in the light of a reassuring theology of the Covenant, nor is it possible to turn the accusation round and set it against man's lack of faith. Even the Enochic route of searching for a metahistorical cause for violence and for an eschatological solution entrusted to the intervention of God seems to Qoheleth to be entirely precluded.

#### 6. *Divine Violence and Human Incomprehension*

It may seem that at this point there remains for Qoheleth only one option: that of considering God as being finally responsible for the injustice present in the world, in a word, of considering him to be a violent God. In fact, Qoheleth does not go down this road; he even rejects the protests of Job. For Qoheleth, God is simply beyond all human judgement (cf. Qoh 8,16-17).

We should observe, however, that in this attitude, Qoheleth shows himself neither an atheist nor a sceptic, not even an agnostic, but rather as profoundly faithful. From this point of view, one can consider Qoheleth as the anti-Adam, or as the antithesis of the אָדָם of Gen 2-3. Qoheleth is the wise man who refuses to gather the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and who knows instead how to accept life, as God offers it to humanity, with the good and the evil (cf., for example, Qoh 7,13-14)<sup>(46)</sup>.

<sup>(45)</sup> Cf. also G. BOCCACCINI, *I giudaismi del Secondo Tempio*. Da Ezechiele a Daniele (Brescia 2008) 146-148.

<sup>(46)</sup> "The relation of man to the knowledge of wisdom goes beyond ethical categories and is a problem of the very nature of things. The first Adam placed his trust in knowledge. Qoheleth's Adam has recognised the mistake of the first

Life appears to Qoheleth in all its pain and toil (עֵינָן; עֵמָל), in all its inconsistency and even in its absurdity (הִבֵּל), but consists also in that labour of seeking and exploring which God himself has given to humanity (1,13; 3,10-11). In this laborious search, the human explorer undoubtedly experiences the dark side of God but, at the same time, discovers that God is the giver of life and joy, that in “fearing God”, “eating and drinking”, the daily joys of life, can be rediscovered as those signs of a presence which is certainly limited and mysterious but nonetheless always real and not necessarily negative.

In conclusion, Qoheleth does not describe his God as an absent divinity or as an unjust or even violent God. He is simply beyond all possibility of comprehension: “the absurdity of evil is a demonstration of man’s incapacity to decipher the will of God which is unfathomable and inaccessible”<sup>(47)</sup>. Certainly there exists in the book of Qoheleth an unresolved tension between the experience of life, which leads Qoheleth to reflect on the absurdity of violence, and faith in the biblical God, who should be proclaimed as the comforter of this same violence. What makes the book of Qoheleth still passionate today, and, in many aspects, contemporary, is his having succeeded in maintaining a strong position between the two extremes: on the one hand, the experience of humanity itself, and, on the other, the fear of God, that is faith in the One who allows human beings to lay claim to the little joys of daily life, joys that are limited but real signs of his presence.

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#### SUMMARY

In the face of violence, Qoheleth’s answer: “There is no one to console them” (Qoh 4,1) seems to be a hostile allusion aimed at God (cf. Isa 40,1) who is considered responsible for that violence. Yet Qoheleth’s God is not an abstract and remote deity; Qoheleth’s criticism is directed rather at the God of retribution (cf. Qoh 9,1-3). By stressing divine transcendence, Qoheleth considers that God is beyond all human comprehension (cf. 8,16-17). In Qoheleth one cannot speak of divine violence, but there is the problem of human language about God. Man can only “fear God” and accept the joy that God grants him as a gift in his fleeting life.

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Adam”: cf. H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, “Conoscere la sapienza. Qohelet e Gen 2-3”, BELLA-PASSARO (eds.), *Il libro del Qohelet*, 335.

<sup>(47)</sup> D’ALARIO, “L’assurdità del male”, 197.

# ANIMADVERSIONES

## An Underappreciated Medical Allusion in Amos 6,6?

Amos 6,4-6 describes a scene where reclining banqueters feast on choice meats, enjoy musical entertainment, consume wine, and anoint themselves with oil. Earlier commentators saw here a denunciation of the decadent ruling classes of the northern kingdom — “a woe upon reckless and indifferent Samaria, who devotes herself to enervating luxury of every kind”<sup>(1)</sup>. Recently, scholars have recognized that Amos may be describing no ordinary banquet, but a *marzaḥ*, as the appearance of this term in 6,7 suggests<sup>(2)</sup>. Indeed, some of the terminology used by the prophet in 6,4-6 seems to have a distinctively cultic flavor<sup>(3)</sup>. The banqueters drink their wine not from cups (כוס; see, e.g., Jer 25,15; 35,5) but from bowls (מזרק); elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, מזרקים are usually associated with the tabernacle (e.g., Exod 27,3; Num 4,14) or the temple (e.g., 1 Kgs 7,40; 2 Kgs 12,14). Also, the banqueters are said to anoint (משח) themselves with oil. This verb usually refers to the ceremonial or ritual application of oil (e.g., Gen 31,13; Exod 28,41; 1 Sam 9,16); the cosmetic application of oil is usually denoted by the verbs סך (e.g., Exod 30,32; Deut 28,40; 2 Sam 12,20) and דשן (Ps 23,5). Thus, it is not clear whether Amos condemns the banqueters for their sybaritic behavior alone or for the additional offense of cultic impropriety.

In either case, the prophet concludes the description in 6,4-6 by calling attention to the self-absorption of those at the feast:

הַשֹּׁמֵרִים בַּמִּזְרָק יֵין וְרֹאשֵׁית שְׁמֵנִים יִמְשְׁחוּ וְלֹא נָחֲלוּ עַל-שֹׁבֵר יוֹסֵף

A standard English translation (NRSV) of Amos 6,6 reads, “[Alas for those] who drink wine from bowls, and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!” This translation conveys the banqueters’ indifference to the fate of “Joseph” — that is, Samaria or the northern kingdom — but it fails to capture the connotations of the other key words in the final clause, namely the *nip'al* form of the verb חלה and the noun שבר. The latter term, etymologically a “break” or “fracture”, may also mean “wound”, as opposed to the more abstract “ruin”; indeed, שבר is not infrequently paired with מכה, “wound”, in parallelistic passages (Isa 30,26; Jer 10,19; 14,17; 30,12; Nah 3,19). And the root meaning of חלה, of course, is

(1) W.R. HARPER, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea* (ICC; New York 1905) 141.

(2) For a summary of recent scholarship treating the banquet as a *marzaḥ*, see J.S. GREER, “A *Marzeah* and a *Mizraq*: A Prophet’s Mêlée with Religious Diversity in Amos 6,4-7”, *JSTOT* 32 (2007) 243-261.

(3) For the ceremonial or ritual connotations of מזרק and משח, see GREER, “A *Marzeah* and a *Mizraq*”, 248-250.

"to be ill", while the *nip'al* participle is used several times to describe a serious injury (modifying *נכה* in Jer 10,19; 14,17; 30,12; Nah 3,19).

To be sure, commentators writing in English have recognized and discussed the medical connotations of these terms; however, they do not always translate the last clause of v. 6 in a way that preserves those connotations. Although J.J.M. Roberts refers to "the failure of Samaria's ruling class to be sickened by the hurt of their own people" in his exegesis of the verse<sup>(4)</sup>, he repeats the NRSV's "ruin" in his translation: "But [they] are not made sick over the ruin of Joseph"<sup>(5)</sup>. F.I. Andersen and D.N. Freedman reproduce the medical register in their paraphrase of the clause: "All are guilty of the same neglect of duty and concern regarding the wounds of Joseph, bleeding internally, but soon to be revealed as fatally injured and beyond cure or care. They should be sick at heart, sick indeed over the impending and growing tragedy; and they are not"<sup>(6)</sup>. Yet their translation of the clause is shorn of this imagery: "They are not distressed at Joseph's crash"<sup>(7)</sup>. Finally, S.M. Paul devotes a paragraph to the medical connotations of *חלה* and *שבר*, noting the occasional use of the verb *רפא* "to heal" with *שבר* (Jer 6,14; 8,11; Ps 60,4)<sup>(8)</sup>. Nevertheless, Paul's translation does not embody those connotations: "But [they] remain unconcerned over the ruin of Joseph"<sup>(9)</sup>.

Modern European commentaries and Bible translations likewise tend to erase the medical connotations of the clause by replacing *שבר* with terms that signal political collapse, rather than bodily harm. Whereas Luther's rendition — "aber bekümmert euch nicht um den Schaden Josefs" — preserves in *Schaden* (injury) the sense of *שבר* as "wound," twentieth-century commentators and translators working in German opt for equivalents like *Ruin*<sup>(10)</sup>, *Verderben* (destruction)<sup>(11)</sup>, *Sturz* (fall)<sup>(12)</sup>, *Untergang* (downfall)<sup>(13)</sup>, *Niederbruch* (breakdown)<sup>(14)</sup>, and *Zusammenbruch* (collapse)<sup>(15)</sup>. While the compounds *Niederbruch* and *Zusammenbruch* pay homage to the root

<sup>(4)</sup> J.J.M. ROBERTS, "Amos 6.1-7," *Understanding the Word. Essays in Honor of Bernhard W. Anderson* (eds. J.T. BUTLER – E.W. CONRAD – B.C. OLLENBURGER) (JSOTSS 37; Sheffield 1985) 160.

<sup>(5)</sup> ROBERTS, "Amos 6.1-7", 156.

<sup>(6)</sup> F.I. ANDERSEN – D.N. FREEDMAN, *Amos. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24A; New York 1989) 569.

<sup>(7)</sup> ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Amos*, xxxvi, 545.

<sup>(8)</sup> S.M. PAUL, *Amos* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 1991) 209-210.

<sup>(9)</sup> PAUL, *Amos*, 199.

<sup>(10)</sup> W. RUDOLF, *Joel – Amos – Obadja – Jona* (KAT 13/2; Gütersloh 1971) 215: "aber der Ruin Josefs kümmert sie nicht".

<sup>(11)</sup> A. WEISER, *Das Buch der zwölf Kleine-Propheten I* (ATD 24; Göttingen 1974) 178: "aber um das Verderben Josefs kümmern sie sich nicht".

<sup>(12)</sup> N.H. TUR-SINAI, *Die Heilige Schrift, neu ins Deutsche übertragen* (Jerusalem 1954) III, 557: "und kränken nicht um Josefs Sturz".

<sup>(13)</sup> M. HOLLAND, *Die Propheten Joel, Amos und Obadja* (Wuppertal – Zurich 1991) 170: "Aber nicht kümmern sie sich um den Untergang Josefs".

<sup>(14)</sup> M. BUBER – F. ROSENZWEIG, *Bücher der Kündigung* (Köln, 1958) 644: "um die Niederbruch Joßefs / kränken sie sich nicht!".

<sup>(15)</sup> H.W. WOLFF, *Dodekapropheton 2. Joel und Amos* (BKAT 14/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1985) 314: "Aber um den Zusammenbruch Josefs kümmern sie sich nicht"; J. JEREMIAS, *Der Prophet Amos* (ATD 24/2; Göttingen 1995) 83: "aber um den Zusammenbruch Josefs haben sie sich nicht bekümmert".

meaning of שבר, “break, fracture” (*Bruch*), they, like the other twentieth-century equivalents, evoke a breach of the body politic. Among French versions, the late-eighteenth-century Bible du Port-Royal neatly expresses the mood of the banqueters “qui êtes insensibles à l’affliction de Joseph,” but in twentieth-century translations it is the *ruine*<sup>(16)</sup> or *désastre*<sup>(17)</sup> of Joseph that is ignored. In Spanish, the Reina-Valera tradition offers the etymologically appropriate *quebrantamiento* (breaking)<sup>(18)</sup>, which a recent literary translation replaces with *desastres*<sup>(19)</sup>. Among Italian versions, the seventeenth-century Diodati Bible favors an etymological equivalent, *rottura* (break, rupture)<sup>(20)</sup>, while the nineteenth-century Martini translation describes the damage to Joseph as an *afflizione* (affliction)<sup>(21)</sup>. But recent translators have chosen terms that point to political misfortune, such as *sfacelo* (collapse, ruin)<sup>(22)</sup> and *rovina* (ruin)<sup>(23)</sup>. Indeed, a contemporary Israeli study of Amos minimizes the medical import of שבר, explaining that in the present context the noun bears the sense of צרה (distress, calamity) or אסון (disaster, catastrophe)<sup>(24)</sup>.

This brief survey suggests that earlier translations are more likely to render שבר in a way that preserves its medical overtones. In the Anglophone tradition, the Authorized Version of 1611 presents “affliction”, which, like Luther’s *Schaden* or indeed Port-Royal’s “affliction”, may refer to bodily harm as well as to more abstract injuries. Combining this term with an etymologically faithful rendition of נחלי yields, “But they are not sickened by the affliction of Joseph”. By restoring the medical connotations of the Hebrew clause, this translation better captures the metaphor used to describe the indifference of the lolling banqueters. At the same time, however, recognition of the medical character of the metaphor prompts another question: Why does the prophet’s criticism of the feast in vv. 4–6 climax with an allusion to illness and wounds? Is there a close relation between the prophet’s diagnosis of the banqueters’ frame of mind and the list of symptoms — reclining on couches,

<sup>(16)</sup> *La Bible de Jérusalem avec guide de lecture* (Paris 1979) 1425: “mais ils ne s’affligent pas de la ruine de Joseph”.

<sup>(17)</sup> E. DHORME et al. (trans.), *La Bible*. L’Ancien Testament (Paris 1956–1959) II, 752: “et ne s’affligent pas du désastre de Joseph”.

<sup>(18)</sup> Casiodoro de Reina’s “Bear Bible” of 1569 reads, “ni se afligen por el quebrantamiento de Joseph”.

<sup>(19)</sup> L. ALONSO SCHÖKEL (trans., with the collaboration of J.M. VALVERDE), *Doce profetas menores* (Madrid 1966) 76: “y no os doléis de los desastres de José”.

<sup>(20)</sup> Diodati: “e non sentite alcuna doglia della rottura di Giuseppe”.

<sup>(21)</sup> Martini: “veruna compassione non hanno dell’afflizione di Giuseppe”.

<sup>(22)</sup> *La Sacra Bibbia, tradotta dai testi originali con note a cura del Pontificio Istituto Biblico di Roma* (Firenze 1957–1958) VII, 252: “ma dello sfacelo di Giuseppe non si dan pena!”

<sup>(23)</sup> H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, *Amos*. Nuova versione, introduzione e commento (I Libri Biblici, Primo Testamento 15; Milano 2002) 125: “ma non si dolgono per la rovina di Giuseppe”. SIMIAN-YOFRE, *Amos*, 132, also paraphrases the clause thus: “Non si dolgono per la distruzione di Giuseppe”.

<sup>(24)</sup> M. WEISS, *The Book of Amos* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1992) I, 198; II, 367, n.166. Weiss cites the use of שבר in Isa 15,5; 30,26; Jer 4,6.20; Lam 2,11.13. In Jer 4,6, שבר is paralleled by רעה, and Jer 4,20 also seems to use שבר in the general sense of “catastrophe”, as does Isa 15,5. But in Isa 30,26 שבר is used metaphorically of a wound that will be bound (חבש), in parallel to מכה.

feasting on meat, delighting in music, drinking wine, and applying oil — that he has just recited?

I suggest that there is, in fact, a poetic association between the last two of these symptoms and the prophet's diagnosis. Wine and oil have a place at the banquet table (compare Ps 23,5), but they probably also featured in the pharmacopoeia of eighth-century BCE Samaria, just as they would be employed by the fictional Samaritan who tended the wounds of an ambushed traveler by "pouring in oil and wine" (Luke 10,34)<sup>(25)</sup>.

The Hebrew Bible itself has little to say about the treatment of wounds: the book of Jeremiah contains three references to the "balm of Gilead" (8,22, with reference to שֶׁבֶר mentioned in v. 21; 46,11; 51,8), and Isaiah mentions the use of oil to "soften" wounds (וַיִּלֶּח רֶכְבָּה בְּשֶׁמֶן, Isa 1,6b). Indeed, the "balm of Gilead" may have been compounded with oil to form an ointment<sup>(26)</sup>. Although the Hebrew Bible does not attest the use of wine to disinfect wounds<sup>(27)</sup>, a textually troubled verse in Proverbs may allude to the practice of washing wounds with wine-vinegar (Prov 25,20)<sup>(28)</sup>.

Nevertheless, the use of vinegar, wine, and oil to clean and dress wounds is well known from Greek and Latin medical literature<sup>(29)</sup>. And a passage in the Mishnah implies that a mixture of wine and oil was applied after circumcision<sup>(30)</sup>. It is reasonable to assume that the therapeutic use of wine

<sup>(25)</sup> On this verse see J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke, X–XXIV* (AB 28A; New York 1985) 887–888; and F. BOVON, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (EKK 3; Zürich – Neukirchener-Vluyn 1999) II, 90–91.

<sup>(26)</sup> R.N. JONES, "Balm", *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York 1992) I, 574.

<sup>(27)</sup> On the efficacy of vinegar and wine as antiseptics, see G. MAJNO, *The Healing Hand. Man and Wound in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA 1975) 186–188. Manjo provides a lively introduction to wound care in antiquity, ranging from the Mediterranean basin through the Near East to India and China.

<sup>(28)</sup> The Hebrew phrase in question is הִמָּץ עַל-נֶזֶק. The noun נֶזֶק is interpreted as "wound" in LXX<sup>a</sup> (ὄξος ἔλκει), and as "natron" in Symmachus (ὄξος ἐπὶ νίτρω). G.R. DRIVER, "Problems and Solutions", VT 4 (1954) 240–242, suggested that נֶזֶק here is cognate to Arabic *natratu*, "wound". His proposal was accepted by W. MCKANE, *Proverbs. A New Approach* (OTL; London 1970) 588–589, but rejected by M.V. FOX, *Proverbs 10–31* (AB 18B; New Haven, CT 2009) 786. Note that LXX<sup>a</sup> seems to contradict medical wisdom in its claim that applying wine-vinegar to a wound is useless: ὥσπερ ὄξος ἔλκει ἀσύμφορον. Compare the translation of D.-M. D'HAMONVILLE, "Comme le vinaigre ne fait aucun bien à une plaie", *Les Proverbes* (La Bible d'Alexandrie 17; Paris 2000) 314.

<sup>(29)</sup> For example: Celsus (1st cent. CE) prescribes that wounds should be cleaned with "a sponge squeezed out of vinegar; or out of wine if the patient cannot bear the strength of vinegar" (*Med.* 5.26.23E) — W.G. SPENCER (trans.), *Celsus. De Medicina* (Cambridge, MA 1935–1938) II, 85, 87; cited in MAJNO, *The Healing Hand*, 367. Celsus also directs that bruises accompanied by damage to the skin should be dressed with a healing agent and bandaged with "wool saturated with vinegar and oil" (*Med.* 5.26.23H) — SPENCER (trans.), *Celsus*, II, 87. Theophrastus (4th cent. BCE) reports that a variety of the herb allheal "is good for sores when mixed with wine and olive oil" (*Hist. pl.* 9.11.1) — A. HORT (trans.), *Theophrastus. Enquiry into Plants and Minor Works on Odours and Weather Signs* (Cambridge, MA 1916–1926) II, 269; cited in FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 888. In the Hippocratic corpus, wine and olive oil are the basis for plasters (*Ulcer.* 11) and wound dressings (*Ulcer.* 11, 22, 24, 26), while wine and olive paste are used in styptics (*Ulcer.* 12) — see the edition and translation of *Ulcers* in P. POTTER, *Hippocrates. VIII* (Cambridge, MA 1995).

<sup>(30)</sup> Shab 19:2: "If the wine and oil had not been mixed on the eve of the Sabbath each may be applied by itself" — H. DANBY (trans.), *The Mishnah* (Oxford 1933) 116; cited in FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke*, 888.

and oil recorded in later Mediterranean sources was familiar to medical practitioners in the Iron Age Levant.

Thus, the close association of the banqueters' drinking and anointing with their indifference to the "wound of Joseph" in Amos 6,4–6 is not accidental: the evidence of their indifference — namely, the dissipation catalogued in 6,4–6a — is compactly assessed by the prophet in v. 6b, which caps this unified passage<sup>(31)</sup>. To return to the problem of translating the final clause in a manner that honors the connotations of the Hebrew original, the anesthetic effect of the wine on the banqueters who are consuming it suggests another solution: "[Alas for those] who drink wine from bowls, and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but feel no pain over the wound of Joseph!"

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#### SUMMARY

In the ancient Mediterranean world, olive oil and wine had medicinal as well as culinary and (in the case of olive oil) cosmetic applications. Amos may be playing on the multiple uses of these items when he condemns banqueters for drinking wine and anointing themselves while ignoring the "wound of Joseph".

<sup>(31)</sup> Disagreement over the referent of שָׁבַר has led some scholars to assign 6,6b to a later author. H.W. Wolff argues that שָׁבַר, like the allusions in 6,2, refers to the advent of Assyrian control in Syro-Palestine, marked by the fall of Kullani and Hamath and by Menahem's submission to Tiglath-Pileser III, all in 738 BCE. Thus Wolff assigns both 6,2 and 6,6b to "the circle of Amos' disciples", since Amos 1,1 limits the prophet's activity to the reign of Jeroboam II; see H.W. WOLFF, *Joel and Amos* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1977) 124, 273–274, 277. But ROBERTS, "Amos 6.1–7", 159–160, suggests that Amos was still active in 738 BCE, and that the "ruin" of Joseph refers to the burden that Menahem's heavy tribute (2 Kgs 15,20) placed on the population of Israel. Hence, Roberts regards 6,1–7, including vv. 4–6, as a unified oracle. Like Wolff, ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Amos*, 552, 565–556, restrict Amos's career to the reign of Jeroboam II. They treat 6,2 as an addition, but they interpret 6,6b as Amos's anticipation of a future threat, and so like Roberts, they too regard 6,4–6 as an integral statement by the prophet. Finally, J.L. MAYS, *Amos. A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia, PA 1969) 117, also accepts the integrity of 6,4–6. He seems to interpret שָׁבַר as a general reference to the effect of violence upon the poor of Samaria. Whether the "wound of Joseph" refers to a historical event (Wolff, Roberts) or to an infirmity of the body politic (Mays, and compare ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Amos*, 568–569), I submit that the poetic logic of 6,6 indicates that 6,6b should not be amputated from the preceding series of clauses.

## **The Composition of II Maccabees: Insights Provided by a Literary *topos* (\*)**

According to its preface II Maccabees is the summary of a much larger work by an otherwise unknown Jason of Cyrene. In its extant form it covers the period from 175-161 B.C. and provides us with a reasonably detailed account of the events leading up to the suppression of the Jewish religion<sup>(1)</sup>. It is, however, a much-maligned text, suffering in comparison to the more “matter-of-fact” I Maccabees. Critics focus on supernatural events and stories, yet II Maccabees is not all miracles and anecdotes<sup>(2)</sup>: in broad outline it agrees with I Maccabees, and evidence external to both texts lends support to its presentation of certain events and/or persons. A notable example is the recent discovery of an inscription containing three letters from the administration of King Seleucus IV. The first of these letters is to one Heliodorus announcing the appointment of an administrator to oversee the sanctuaries of the region (including Judaea). The purpose seems to be the extension of royal control over the region’s sanctuaries and revenues. This is the very point to which the Jews object in II Maccabees, where in Chapter 3 a Seleucid ‘chief minister’ called Heliodorus is sent to seize some funds held in the Temple, only to be thwarted by divine intervention (2 Macc 3,4-40). The miracle aside, the convergence between inscription and text is revealing<sup>(3)</sup>.

Be that as it may, it is true that the composition of II Maccabees as we have it is unusual. To begin it is prefixed by two letters that, although they were attached at a very early date, are almost certainly later additions and

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(<sup>1</sup>) All dates are B.C. unless otherwise stated. All translations are my own although I have made extensive use of commentaries by J.A. GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees* (AB 41A; Garden City, NY 1983) and F.M. ABEL, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (Paris 1949), so what I have set may reflect agreement with these translations.

(<sup>2</sup>) The scholarship is extensive, but see as demonstrative E. BICKERMAN, *Der Gott der Makkabäer* (Berlin 1937); C. HABICHT, *2.Makkabäerbuch*. Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit I.3 (Gütersloh 1976) and ABEL, *Livres*, who have all maintained the categorisation of II Maccabees as “tragic”, to the detriment of its acceptance as a “proper” historical work. Contra, note R. DORAN, *Temple Propaganda*. The purpose and character of II Maccabees (Washington 1981) 77-81 (also 84-97). For more see also R. DORAN, “2 Maccabees and Tragic History”, *HUCA* 50 (1979) 107-114; GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 20-22; L.L. GRABBE, *Judaism From Cyrus to Hadrian* (London 1992) 224.

(<sup>3</sup>) See H.M. COTTON – M. WÖRRLE, “Seleukos IV to Heliodorus: A New Dossier of Royal Correspondence from Israel”, *ZPE* 159 (2007) 191-203. They conclude that this stele is independent verification of II Maccabees’ account of events leading up to the Maccabean revolt; the miracle is described as a way of ‘dressing up’ the rebuff against Seleucus IV’s attempt at the Temple treasury. On the office of ‘Chief Minister’ see E.J. BICKERMAN, *Institutions des Séleucides* (Paris 1938) 197. This is not an isolated example, note also (e.g.) the assassin Andronicus (2 Macc 5,31-38); on him cf. Diod 30,7.2 and GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 238-239.



have only a loose connection with the text proper<sup>(4)</sup>. Their removal would not affect the main narrative, although the person who added the second letter (or perhaps a later hand) has made adjustments to the main text crudely moving what we currently have as Chapter 9 from just before Chapter 10,9<sup>(5)</sup>. This introduces the possibility of several hands reworking the extant narrative; in fact three are generally accepted: The person who attached the letters and transposed Chapter 9; Jason of Cyrene who is the named original author; and the epitomiser, someone who is increasingly being accepted as an author in his own right and largely responsible for the extant form of the text. As we turn our attention to the composition of the narrative and literary patterns within it, our interest (at least initially) must be with this author. What we know of him or, at least, what is generally accepted is that he was a Jew who wrote his summary in Greek and was versed in Greek ideological concepts. He, for example, uses Hellenic idioms for his own purposes. Specifically, he is the first extant author to use the terms 'Hellenism' and 'Judaism', an adaptation of the Greek expression to 'medise' <sup>(6)</sup>. This clear manipulation of the Greek language and Greek ideology demonstrates the ease in which our author could move through a Hellenic environment and possibly gives an indication of the control he had over his work. Even if we postulate that Jason coined the terms, our epitomiser at least knew enough to maintain them in his interpretation of the earlier work. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the summariser may have been responsible for including the letters in Chapter 11 and reworking the narrative to interpret them (albeit partially incorrectly)<sup>(7)</sup>; while Erich Gruen even highlights the extent of humour in the text<sup>(8)</sup>. Individual interpretations aside, all these studies suggest literary ability and control over the text: the summariser it seems is not a mere copyist, but an author in his own right.

<sup>(4)</sup> These letters and their connection with the main text are the subject of much debate: See (e.g.) E. SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (eds. G. VERMES – F. MILLAR – M. GOODMAN) (Edinburgh 1973-1987) III, 533-534; GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 6, 25-27, 164-166, 540-545; DORAN, *Temple Propaganda*, 6-12; V. PARKER, "The Letters in II Maccabees: Reflexions on the book's composition", *ZAW* 119 (2007) 386-402, esp. 386-388 and notes therein.

<sup>(5)</sup> This was done to ensure that both the letter and the text have Antiochus IV dying before the Temple is purified. Other inconsistencies between the letters and text are left suggesting that the 'transposer' could do little more than 'cut and paste'. See GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 345-347; V. PARKER, "The Campaigns of Lysias in Judaea: A Test of the Historical Worth of 2 Maccabees", *Grazer Beiträge* 25 (2006) 153-179; PARKER, *Letters*, 386-402; Contra DORAN, *Temple Propaganda*, 61-62.

<sup>(6)</sup> See Herodotus' description of Greeks who supported the Persian or Median cause: *Hdt.* 4,144; 8,30; also *Thuc.* 3,62 etc. Note also GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 230; Y. AMIR, "The term 'Ἰουδαϊσμός' (IUDAIISMOS). A Study in Jewish-Hellenic Self Identification", *Immanuel* 14 (1982) 34-41.

<sup>(7)</sup> PARKER, *Campaigns*, 153-179; PARKER, *Letters*, 386-402. We will conclude by noting that the hand responsible for reworking the letters in Chapter 11 may actually be different from the epitomiser, although in no way does this discredit the underlying point that our author (the epitomiser) is responsible for extensive reworking or writing of the extant text.

<sup>(8)</sup> E. GRUEN, *Diaspora* (Harvard 2002) 176-180.

### 1. *The Literary topos*

With this in mind, let us examine a literary construct readily identifiable in the text that will not only allow us tentatively to suggest sections of the text written by the same hand, but also provide an insight into the relationship between the Jews and other peoples (in particular the Greeks). To the *topos* itself: In short, it seems our author is prone to use exaggeration or an unlikely scenario to emphasise a point. Consider the account of how Menelaus had instigated plunder, sacrilege and a riot in Jerusalem (2 Macc 4,39-42); and then how the king after listening to the complaints as laid out by three members of the Jewish senate (γερονσία) both acquits Menelaus (primarily owing to the interference of Ptolemaeus) and condemns to death his accusers (2 Macc 4,43-50). These are men, we are so eloquently informed, whom even the Scythians (understand: those most uncivilised of peoples) would have acquitted (2 Macc 4,47). Our author is clearly disgusted at the execution of the Jews (and perhaps the inequality of Seleucid [Hellenic] justice) and emphasises this point by using support from an unlikely group: the Scythians: a people that are both (1) distant from the Jews in a geographic sense — at the edge of the world (a *topos* in its own right); and (2) are recognised by the Hellenes as symbolic of the unsophisticated ‘other’, a point made very clear in Hartog’s analysis of Herodotus’ *Histories*<sup>(9)</sup>. This is an assessment that our author would have been all too aware of considering the ease with which he made use of Hellenic idioms.

It appears, therefore, that the disgust at the turn of events, specifically the execution of three Jews, is highlighted by the unlikely or unexpected. In terms of the literary construct itself the description of what occurred and the statement of exaggeration (that provides emphasis) is, in this example, linked by καί translated as ‘even’. Hence: even those most uncivilised of peoples, the Scythians, would have acquitted them. The contempt our author has for Seleucid officials is thus brought to the fore.

This is not the only time that our author uses this rhetorical figure together with the device of the emphatic καί. Earlier in Chapter 4, for example, representatives from Jerusalem were sent to Tyre as part of the quinquennial games celebration:

“When the quinquennial games were being held at Tyre in the presence of the king, the villainous Jason sent, as envoys to represent Jerusalem, Antiochenes bearing three hundred drachmas in silver for the sacrifice to Herakles. Yet, *even* the bearers (ie. the Antiochenes) thought that this money ought not to be used for a sacrifice, as it was improper, but (felt) that it should be devoted to some other expense”<sup>(10)</sup>.

<sup>(9)</sup> F. HARTOG, *Mirror of Herodotus*. Representations of the Other in the writing of History (Berkeley, CA 1988). On Herodotus and the ‘other’ more generally, see also P. CARTLEDGE, “Herodotus and ‘The Other’: A Meditation on Empire”, *Echos du Monde Classique/Classical Views* XXXIV, N.S. 9 (1990) 27-40; J. REDFIELD “Herodotus The Tourist”, *CP* 80 (1985) 97-118; J. MARINCOLA, *Greek Historians* (Greece and Rome: New Surveys in the Classics 31; Oxford 2001) 19-60; V.J. GRAY, “Herodotus and the Rhetoric of ‘Otherness’”, *AJPh* 116 (1985) 185-211.

<sup>(10)</sup> 2 Macc 4,18-20, emphasis added.

The key to unravelling this passage is in understanding our author's opinion of the Antiochenes. This is provided earlier in the chapter, where we have an account of how Jason procured through bribery the priesthood (2 Macc 4,7-8), then introduced societal changes into Jerusalem (such as a gymnasium and an ephebic education) and registered 'those who were Antiochenes in Jerusalem' (2 Macc 4,7-17); presumably he drew up a list of those who were to be awarded this new status<sup>(11)</sup>. What is important is that our author reacts negatively to these changes. They are described as undermining the priests' desire to preform their religious duties and influencing them to discard traditional Jewish laws and customs. The result is summed up in the clearest terms: to transgress in such a way, acting profanely against God's laws, would have consequences: the Lord would discipline His people<sup>(12)</sup>. We must incorporate this understanding to our interpretation of events in Tyre: The impropriety of Jason's offering is emphasised in that the Antiochenes — a group central to the problematic societal changes in Jerusalem — even they question whether it is right to give 300 drachmas as a sacrifice to Herakles. Support from an unlikely group (in this case the Antiochenes, previously the Scythians) is used to emphasise a point: here, disgust at idol worship.

The *topos*, therefore, is relatively simple and tends to turn on the emphatic καί. Nevertheless there are layers of complexity. First, not every use of the emphatic καί marks our *topos*<sup>(13)</sup>, and conversely (as will become apparent) the emphasis of a point through the development of an improbable scenario does not depend on the presence of the emphatic καί; albeit that the comparative emphasis inherent to the term 'even' remains. Second, context is demonstratively important: our author's opinion of the Antiochenes (above) makes the *topos* apparent, and without that understanding the passage can be read in an entirely different way. This recognition is brought into sharp focus when considering some of the other uses our author makes of this construction: recognising the *topos* changes a commonly accepted interpretation of several passages. Consider the description of the murder of

<sup>(11)</sup> There is considerable debate as to who the *Antiochenes* were and what our author actually means here; see e.g. J. GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees* (AB 41; Garden City, NY 1976) 110-122; GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 227; V.A. TCHERIKOVER, *Hellenistic Civilisation and the Jews* (Philadelphia, PA 1959) 161-163, 404-409; SCHÜRER, *History of the Jewish People* I, 148. Regardless, what we are concerned with is our author's opinion of this group: what they are responsible for makes his hostility clear.

<sup>(12)</sup> Note 2 Macc 4,17 and the description of events following which fulfil the promise made here. The authorial insertion at 2 Macc 6,12-17 is also of interest.

<sup>(13)</sup> In part this could be due to individual interpretation in translations, e.g. compare Goldstein and NRSV versions of 2 Macc 6,23; or it could be due to our author copying a section into the text and not editing it — such as a story, again cf. 2 Macc 6,23 ("The martyrdom of Eleazar": 2 Macc 6,18-31). A sophisticated author will also use language to his best advantage, so a specific literary construction (our *topos*) may not be appropriate every time an identified term (i.e. emphatic καί) appears; or the construct may be uncertain.

So 2 Macc 4,3: "When his hatred progressed to such a degree that even murders were committed by one of Simon's approved agents" τῆς δὲ ἐχθρᾶς ἐπὶ τοσούτον προβαλνούσης ὥστε καὶ διὰ πινος τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σιμωνος δεδοκιμασμένων φόνους συντελεῖσθαι. Were the murders committed or are they a stereotypical exaggeration to further condemn Simon's character? Either way, to foreshadow a later discussion, the same hand that developed our *topos* is likely responsible for this phrase as there is similarity in construction.

Onias III, a virtuous and law-abiding former high priest. In the account Menelaus, who had scurrilously succeeded Jason as High Priest (2 Macc 4,23-24) arranges for one Andronicus to murder Onias, probably to cover up thievery from the Temple that he had undertaken to pay promised bribes, a theft that Onias was about to expose (2 Macc 4,32-34). We are then informed that: 'The wicked murder of this man not only caused resentment among the Jews but *even* among many from other nations'. The passage continues to place further emphasis on the wickedness of the deed by becoming more specific as to whence some of the sympathy derived: *even* the Greeks, we are told, detested this crime <sup>(14)</sup>.

One possible reading of this narrative suggests that here we have an example of friendly relations between the other nations and the Jews <sup>(15)</sup>. However, recognising that this passage is another example of our *topos* suggests another interpretation: The dignity of Onias is magnified by suggesting the unlikely; first foreigners and then specifically Greeks condemn his murder. Friendship isn't being presented here; rather the passage depends on improbability and exaggeration to reinforce the point: 'even those godless murderous Greeks who have caused us so much pain and suffering, who themselves have killed so many of our people, even they thought that this murder of that most upstanding Onias was callous and unjust'. Furthermore, this interpretation is supported by the overall context of the chapter. The author has not long finished emphasising the hostility of the Jews towards Hellenic customs, condemning Jason for introducing Hellenic practices into Jerusalem and undermining ancestral ways (2 Macc 4,7-20). Our author is not now likely to be praising anything Hellenic, let alone the Greeks themselves; the subtlety of our literary *topos* is more probable.

The same conclusion applies to two other examples that some see as demonstrative of Jewish 'friendly relations' with Gentiles <sup>(16)</sup>. The first is a continuation of the account of the Jewish accusers of Menelaus, who were condemned to death by Antiochus (2 Macc 4,39-48). Following on from this description we learn that Antiochus' condemnation resulted in even the Tyrians showing sympathy in the form of a splendid funeral (2 Macc 4,49). Our reading would not see this as sympathetic support, rather an instance of unlikely generosity emphasising the unjustness of Antiochus' actions. After all, the Tyrians are, elsewhere, presented as supporters of pagan rituals (2 Macc 4,18-20) and had brought some of the Temple's treasures (2 Macc 4,32); acts inconsistent with Jewish ideals <sup>(17)</sup>.

<sup>(14)</sup> See 2 Macc 4,35-36: "The wicked murder of this man not only caused resentment among the Jews but even among many from other nations. (36) When the king returned from Cilicia, the Jews from Antioch sent him a petition about the indefensible killing of Onias, a crime detested even by the Greeks" δι' ἣν αἵτιαν οὐ μόνον Ἰουδαῖοι, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐδείναζον καὶ ἐδυσφόρουν ἐπὶ τῷ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀδικῶ φόνῳ. τοῦ δὲ βασιλείας ἐπανελθόντος ἀπὸ τῶν κατὰ Κιλικίαν τόπων ἐνετύγχανον οἱ κατὰ πόλιν Ἰουδαῖοι συμμυσοπονηρούντων καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὑπὲρ τοῦ παρὰ λόγον τὸν Ονιαν ἀπεκτονῆσθαι.

<sup>(15)</sup> So (e.g.) GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 241.

<sup>(16)</sup> See (e.g.) S.R. JOHNSON, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity* (Berkeley, CA 2004) 38-39; GOLDSTEIN, *I Maccabees*, 34; GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 200-201, 241.

<sup>(17)</sup> The Tyrians are only mentioned in Chapter 4 (2 Macc 4,18.32.44.49). Little can be gleaned about Jewish attitudes towards the Tyrians in these references — although buying

The second example occurs near the start of the book proper. We are informed that the early Seleucid kings (and especially Seleucus IV) paid for Temple celebrations during the time that Onias was High Priest (2 Macc 3,2-3). This passage praises Onias, not because he fostered a positive relationship with the Seleucids, but because even the Seleucid kings respected the Temple. The distinction is subtle but informative: everyone knew what the Seleucid kings were really like — a point reinforced by our author in the following lines when Seleucus IV instructs Heliodorus to remove funds from the Temple (2 Macc 3,7-40). We should interpret the passage as emphasising Onias III's 'greatness' through the suggestion that even those blasphemous gentile kings could have paid him and the Temple respect.

One further passage and example of our *topos* must be mentioned. In Chapter 9 Antiochus, on his death bed and wracked with pain, finally "sees the light" and promises to give the Jews equal privileges to those enjoyed by the citizens of Athens. The promises are not, however, all that they seem. In the mind of the unreformed Antiochus Athens is represented as the zenith of human civilisation, while the Jews are viewed as the absolute *nadir* ("the fodder for the birds of prey" — 2 Macc 9,15). The reformed Antiochus will reverse this assessment and switch from condemning to supporting Jewish culture: the Jews will take the position of (or will at least be equivalent to) the Athenians<sup>(18)</sup>. The problem is that the circumstances with which our author lets Antiochus make his offer demonstrates that he does not believe Antiochus' sincerity and neither it seems does the Lord (2 Macc 9,18). Furthermore, the account is rich with irony: even on his deathbed Antiochus does not understand that the Jews do not want to be Athenians (Hellenes). This ideology is reinforced by the subsequent use of the by now familiar device of the emphatic καί: Antiochus "even (καί) promises to turn Jew" (2 Macc 9,17); and the use of exaggeration to achieve effect, when an unlikely people or person shows favour to or sympathises with the Jews. The obvious is not the reality in this passage. The role for the Athenians is as the antithesis of the Jews, indicating that they cannot be viewed in a friendly way; to the contrary, the literary constructs and undercurrents in this passage suggest contempt<sup>(19)</sup>.

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Temple treasures does suggest, at best, ambivalence. Interpretation of 2 Macc 4,49 as another example of our literary *topos* provides consistency in the general construct of chapter four regarding Jews and "others".

<sup>(18)</sup> See 2 Macc 9,15: "But he would make all the Jews, whom he had [hitherto] not judged to be worthy of burial, but [rather] of being thrown with the dumb beasts as fodder for birds of prey, the equals of [what] the Athenians [had hitherto been]" (τοὺς δὲ Ἰουδαίους, οὓς διεγνώκει μηδὲ ταφῆς ἀξιῶσαι, οἰωνοβρώτους δὲ σὺν τοῖς νηπίοις ἐκρίψειν θηρίοις, πάντας αὐτοὺς ἴσους Ἀθηναίοις ποιήσιν).

The choice of the Athenians is also interesting since Athens is outside of the Seleucid Empire, and it is an Athenian whom Antiochus uses to introduce the Hellenic customs so despised by our author (2 Macc 6,1-3). It would have been known that Antiochus was a great admirer of Athenian culture, he had after all spent time there on his way back from Rome — Appian Syr. XI.45; Polybius 26,1; OGIS I no. 248 vv. 55-56; O. MØRKHOJLM *Antiochus IV of Syria* (København 1966) 40-42.

<sup>(19)</sup> Strangely most commentators interpret the representation of the Athenians here as positive. See (e.g.) GOLDSTEIN, *II Maccabees*, 356, who argues that "Jason assumes to be treated like an Athenian is a privilege". It is not Jason but Antiochus who makes this assumption, the author of this passage holds an altogether more hostile view.

## 2. *Interpreting the topos*

If we are right then two comments can be made. First, a more subtle analysis of the text brings into question widely accepted instances of friendly relations between Jews and Gentiles, in particular Hellenes. This has ramifications for the current trend in scholarship to minimise any representation of hostility in II Maccabees between the Greeks and the Jews, Judaism and Hellenism<sup>(20)</sup>. We should not forget that II Maccabees describes a rebellion by the Jews against the Seleucid overlords; hostility is to be expected, not excluded. In this, our literary construction is more consistent with the wider context of events described, be it in terms of the Book as a whole or the narrative surrounding our examples. This does not mean that our author always portrays other nations in a negative way, rather it seems friendly relations are the exception. So, for example, the actions of the Jews of Scythopolis are noteworthy as an oddity, although it is perhaps significant that this episode can also show Judas in a magnanimous light<sup>(21)</sup>. In short, our author does not tend to have a positive impression of outside groups (the "other"), which he seems to perceive as a threat to Judaism<sup>(22)</sup>.

The second observation brings us back to points raised at the start of this paper, to those likely involved in the formation of the text as we have it. The development of the literary construction we have discussed may provide some insight, especially when we consider what we already know about the text. Chapter 9, it seems is pivotal. It has been shown elsewhere that the letter in Chapter 9 was probably not genuine, and I suspect the author also constructed the account of Antiochus IV's death; they are a perfect fit<sup>(23)</sup>. Furthermore, the letter, standing where it is after the account of Antiochus' illness and repentance, follows the same pattern as our literary *topos*.

<sup>(20)</sup> This is a central theme in the analysis of I and II Maccabees. For recent comments and an indication of current trends see (e.g.) E. GRUEN, *Heritage and Hellenism. The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley, CA 1998); J. GOLDSTEIN, "Jewish Acceptance and Rejection of Hellenism", *Jewish and Christian Self Definition* (eds. E.P. SANDERS – A.I. BAUMGARTEN – A. MENDELSON) (London 1981) II, 64–87, 318–326. More informative is T. RAJAK, "The Hasmoneans and the Uses of Hellenism", *A Tribute to Geza Vermes. Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature* (eds. P.R. DAVIES – R.T. WHITE) (JSOT.S 100; Sheffield 1990) 261–280, who recognises the complexities involved.

<sup>(21)</sup> 2 Macc 12,29–31. The leniency here contrasts with actions taken at other cities (compare e.g. 2 Macc 12,3; 12,16; etc.), perhaps to create "depth" to Judas' character.

<sup>(22)</sup> That our author can oppose the Greeks and Hellenism (at least when Judaism is perceived to be threatened) and at the same time embrace some Hellenic constructs (i.e. writing in Greek) is not the contradiction it at first appears. Greek customs, modes, manners, etc. can be taken over in time in a way that minimises any Hellenic associations; while conscious use of Hellenic institutions for (say) political purposes is an entirely different scenario. See RAJAK, "Hasmoneans", 261–280; U. RAPPAPORT, "The Hellenization of the Hasmoneans", *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation. Past Traditions, Current Issues and Future Prospects* (ed. M. MOR) (Lanham 1992) 1–13; and G.L. MORRISON, *Second Maccabees and Jewish Society. Representations of Jewishness, Hellenism and the Interaction between the Greeks and the Jews* (unpublished diss. University of Canterbury 2005).

<sup>(23)</sup> PARKER, *Letters*, 390–397, 400–401, demonstrates that the whole letter is a forgery, not just the greeting as is noted elsewhere; see comments by (e.g.) E.J. BICKERMANN, "Une question d'authenticité: les privilèges juifs", *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (Leiden 1976–1986) II, 35; C. HABICHT, "Royal Documents in Maccabees II", *HSCP* 80 (1976) 1–18, esp. 6.

Antiochus' letter, like the Scythians and Greeks previously, serve a literary role by emphasising the improbable, exaggerating Antiochus' repentance and confirming his lack of comprehension regarding what the Jews actually want (or don't want). This suggests that the letter's author also wrote or at all events reworked Chapter 9 to make it and the letter fit<sup>(24)</sup>. Moreover, the author of Chapter 9 is the same hand responsible for similar patterning elsewhere in the text, specifically significant sections of Chapters 3 and 4. Not only do all these chapters contain examples of our literary *topos*, each discussed example relates to key events in the Chapter. In other words, our literary *topos* is not an *ad hoc* addition to these chapters; rather it suggests the same (sophisticated) hand was at work through all. In addition at least two other sections in II Maccabees follow the basic structure of our *topos* and / or have similarities to the passages cited that would also assign them to the one author, specifically: the account of Jason's demise in Sparta (2 Macc 5,5-10) and the friendship between Judas and Nicanor (2 Macc 14,20-22.25). The latter account seems to mirror that of Onias and Seleucus, supposed friendship and subsequent hostility; while Jason's death in Sparta at least mirrors Antiochus' death in that they share the same *topos* of dying in a distant, foreign land. Both also present improbable scenarios to emphasise characteristics or develop the narrative, which are indicative of our literary *topos*. The absence of the emphatic καί does not discredit the association, rather we have an indication of the complex and subtle ways our author could employ exaggeration.

Two hands emerge as possible candidates for the development of the literary construction and, correspondingly, the sections of text identified: There is Jason himself or the epitomiser. While a choice must remain speculative, it has been shown elsewhere that the epitomiser is responsible for extensively reworking the text. We have shown that the hand that used our literary *topos* wrote significant parts of Chapters 3 and 4, possibly sections of Chapters 5 and 14, as well as Chapter 9 and forged the letter therein. It seems appropriate to assign this work to the epitomiser, although all that can be suggested as support at this point are the identified links between chapters which supports a single hand undertaking widespread revision; and that Chapters 3 and 4 are near the start of the book proper — that is after the prefixed letters — a place we might expect some sort of introductory summation.

Still, if we are correct then we are further enhancing the growing reputation of the epitomiser as an historian in his own right. He was demonstrably in control of his material, making skilful use of literary constructions and rewriting significant portions of the text to emphasise what was important to him<sup>(25)</sup>. The undervaluing of the text by some twentieth century scholars can no longer be substantiated. Be that as it may, our conclusion also presents problems and questions. Specifically: (1) The forger

<sup>(24)</sup> PARKER, *Letters*, 390-397, 400-401, also suggests that the hand that wrote the letter was the same as that responsible for Chapter 9.

<sup>(25)</sup> If we are wrong then Jason's ability needs to be recognised and we can credit the epitomiser with not revising important and at times subtle literary constructs. Either way the value of the text is enhanced: it was penned by an author with some ability.

of the letter in Chapter 9 almost certainly stands close in time to the events themselves. If he is, as we labelled him, the epitomiser then this leaves little time for Jason to write his five-volume history and our author to produce his own version <sup>(26)</sup>. On the positive we at least have an account put together only a generation or so after the events themselves. (2) We also must have another author, a potential fourth-hand, who would be responsible for working in the letters of Chapter 11 and revising the text to be consistent with his interpretation of those letters. Recently this work has been suggested as that of the epitomiser, but the forger of the letter in Chapter 9 (who we have suggested is the epitomiser) was not the same hand that reworked the letters in Chapter 11: style and ability differ <sup>(27)</sup>. If the author of Chapter 11 was not Jason, then we have a complicating factor, but then the text and transmission of II Maccabees has always been the subject of extensive debate. Importantly, neither point detracts from our assessment of the literary construction that we have identified or the relationship between the Jews and other peoples. They simply raise further issues that need to be dealt with elsewhere.

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#### SUMMARY

II Maccabees is an unusual text, its composition and content are topics of extensive discussion. This paper identifies a literary construct that we attribute to the epitomiser. Its identification allows us to assign various parts of the text to the same hand giving us more insight into both the text's composition and the epitomiser's ability as an historian and writer. Furthermore, the identified literary *topos* suggests that recent attempts to minimise the extent to which II Maccabees represents any conflict between the Greeks and the Jews, Judaism and Hellenism may need to be reconsidered, some apparent instances of favourable relations between the Jews and other nations (in particular the Hellenes) are not what they seem.

<sup>(26)</sup> PARKER, *Letters*, 400-401.

<sup>(27)</sup> PARKER, *Letters*, 386-402.



# RECENSIONES

## Vetus Testamentum

John VAN SETERS, *The Edited Bible. The Curious History of the "Editor" in Biblical Criticism*. Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 2006. xii – 428 p. 16 × 23,5. \$39.50

La thèse défendue dans ce volume se résume en quelques mots: le recours aux éditeurs ou aux rédacteurs — pour John Van Seters, les deux termes sont peu ou prou des synonymes — est une erreur de l'exégèse moderne. La formation de la Bible ne peut s'expliquer par l'intervention d'éditeurs ou de rédacteurs successifs. Elle est au contraire l'œuvre d'auteurs au sens propre du terme qui ont, certes, employé des sources, mais qui leur ont imprimé un cachet personnel et parfaitement reconnaissable. Dans son plaidoyer, il déclare donc la guerre à la *Redaktionsgeschichte* et s'en prend à plus d'une reprise à l'exégèse allemande des deux siècles passés, surtout à propos du Yahviste et du Deutéronomiste.

Van Seters avait déjà exposé ses idées sur le sujet entre autres dans deux articles ("The Redactor in Biblical Studies: A Nineteenth Century Anachronism", *JNSL* 29 [2003] 1-19; "An Ironic Circle: Wellhausen and the Rise of Redaction Criticism", *ZAW* 115 [2003] 487-500). Sa principale ligne d'argumentation part d'un constat: le mot «éditeur», dans son usage courant, a été introduit à la Renaissance. Si le mot n'existe pas, la chose n'existe pas non plus avant la Renaissance. De plus, le mot «éditeur» décrit avant tout l'activité de ceux qui publient d'anciens manuscrits. Ces éditeurs se gardent bien d'altérer les textes, si ce n'est pour les libérer des gloses, erreurs et scholies introduites par des scribes distraits ou ignorants. Cette notion est en contradiction avec la *Redaktionsgeschichte* où le «rédacteur» est en fait responsable d'interventions multiples et décisives dans la formation du texte. De deux choses l'une, nous dit Van Seters: ou bien l'éditeur/rédacteur respecte le texte, comme le dit la définition courante du terme et il ne peut donc être responsable d'ajouts ou de «couches rédactionnelles» ou bien il compose le texte et alors il vaut mieux l'appeler «auteur» de ce texte. *Tertium non datur*.

La démonstration s'appuie sur une enquête très instructive sur l'emploi de la terminologie en question. Après une introduction qui spécifie les données du problème, le second chapitre est consacré à la période classique, en particulier à Homère. En quelques mots, Van Seters affirme, sur la foi d'un grand nombre d'auteurs consultés, qu'il n'existe pas d'éditeurs d'Homère dans l'antiquité. Le troisième chapitre passe en revue la question de l'édition des textes bibliques durant l'antiquité pour arriver à une conclusion tranchée:

«The misunderstanding of ancient historiography and the displacement of the author/historian by the notion of editor or redactor is one of the fundamental errors of redaction criticism» (112). Origène et Jérôme, par exemple, ont édité des textes bibliques en les respectant au maximum. Eusèbe, quant à lui, s'est montré créatif, et il est considéré comme l'auteur de ses œuvres, non comme un rédacteur de sources anciennes.

Le quatrième chapitre traite de la question de l'éditeur après la découverte de l'imprimerie. Dans ces pages, Van Seters mentionne un nom fatidique: Richard Bentley. Celui-ci introduit dans les études classiques l'usage de restaurer le texte original en le purgeant de nombreuses interpolations. La méthode est discutable, car Bentley se fiait surtout à son flair (*divination*) pour améliorer le texte, mais elle aura grand succès. Dans le cinquième chapitre, c'est F.A. Wolf qui devient l'objet d'une condamnation sans appel. Ce fameux spécialiste d'Homère était en relation avec J.G. Eichhorn et il est inutile de dire qu'il existe plus d'un lien entre les recherches sur Homère et celles sur la formation du Pentateuque. Wolf emploie deux notions qu'il emprunte à Robert Wood: l'existence d'une tradition orale et celle d'un «ingénieux éditeur» qui compose les épopées à partir de poèmes originaux plus brefs. Mais, et Van Seters insiste sur la chose, ces notions ont été abandonnées par la recherche sur Homère. Les poèmes homériques dont l'œuvre d'auteurs au sens plein du terme. Les études bibliques, toutefois, continuent à travailler avec ce que Van Seters appelle «a disease of language» (243).

Le sixième chapitre s'attaque à une page essentielle de l'histoire de l'exégèse vétérotestamentaire: la longue période qui va de Richard Simon à Julius Wellhausen. Richard Simon est coupable d'avoir introduit la notion anachronique d'éditeur dans le monde de l'exégèse pour permettre de sauver l'historicité des récits bibliques. Des scribes auraient transmis fidèlement les textes depuis Moïse jusqu'à Esdras, et ils les auraient également colligés et mis à jour.

Un septième chapitre s'emploie à pourfendre l'éditeur/rédacteur dans la recherche exégétique du vingtième siècle. Wellhausen et ses disciples faisaient intervenir les rédacteurs uniquement dans le travail de compilation des sources. Ces interventions sont réduites au minimum. Mais l'exégèse du Nouveau Testament, avec Marxsen, réintroduit le rédacteur dans le paysage exégétique. L'idée vient des études de Wellhausen sur les évangiles, mais Marxsen l'interprète à contresens puisqu'il fait de ce rédacteur un personnage créatif responsable de la forme finale des textes. Les exégètes vétérotestamentaires les ont naïvement suivis. Deux grands interprètes, Martin Noth et Gerhard von Rad, avaient toutefois réussi à libérer l'exégèse des éditeurs/rédacteurs pour rendre au Yahviste et au Deutéronomiste leur dignité d'auteurs et d'historiens authentiques. Mais les exégètes ne les ont pas suivis et ont préféré s'attacher aux notions désuètes du dix-neuvième siècle. Tous, sauf un, et vous aurez deviné de qui il s'agit.

Van Seters dédie son huitième chapitre à la critique textuelle où il estime que la confusion y règne comme ailleurs. Il faudrait distinguer, dit-il, entre l'éditeur d'un texte ancien qui cherche à le transmettre dans sa forme originale et les créateurs de nouvelles recensions qui introduisent dans le texte interpolations et corrections. Le dernier chapitre aborde le problème du texte

canonique pour constater la même situation pénible. Van Seters souligne les difficultés bien connues inhérentes à la lecture canonique des textes bibliques. Il observe entre autres que le recours à la communauté croyante comme lieu de formation et de transmission des textes est anachronique parce que la Bible soulignent l'hostilité d'Israël à la prédication des prophètes. Il s'en prend aussi, certes, à l'exégèse interne à la Bible (*innerbiblical exegesis*) de M. Fishbane auquel il reproche d'appliquer au texte biblique des notions tardives provenant de l'exégèse rabbinique et en particulier du midrash. La thèse est résumée une dernière fois dans *Summary and Conclusion*. L'ouvrage contient un index des auteurs et un index thématique, mais aucune bibliographie.

La lecture de ce volume bien documenté et riche en citations est passionnante, sauf sur un point, s'il nous est permis d'émettre une réserve: certains se lasseront d'entendre répéter la thèse de l'A. à temps et à contretemps. Faut-il ajouter: *qui nimis probat, nihil probat*? Ce serait sans doute exagéré. Mais j'avoue rester sceptique quant à la thèse de Van Seters et cela pour quatre raisons principales.

Tout d'abord, la notion d'auteur, appliquée aux textes anciens et le plus souvent anonymes, me semble tout aussi problématique que celle de rédacteur ou d'éditeur. Je me contente d'une seule citation: «The question about who wrote the Bible is also misguided because it emphasizes the individuality of the author. The emphasis on individual expression is not a universal value, even if it is a god of modern American culture. In some cultures, the group takes precedence over the individual. In folk literature, for instance, the literature belongs to the group that shares the tradition. The meaning of the text is not tied to the singer of tales. [...] Early Israel and its literature certainly reflect this emphasis on the group rather than the individual» (W.M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* [Cambridge 2004] 6). Il est certain que von Rad et Noth ont été très influencés par la critique littéraire romantique et son insistance sur la «grande personnalité». Van Seters n'est pas lui aussi influencé à son insu par le romanticisme et le culte de l'expression individuelle?

En second lieu, il existe à mon sens un intermédiaire entre l'éditeur au sens de Van Seters qui s'attache à publier le texte dans sa forme originale et l'auteur qui compose une œuvre nouvelle à partir de sources. Qui est l'auteur de l'épopée de Gilgamesh ou celui du code d'Hammurabi? Qui sont les auteurs des mythes de l'antiquité, des contes de Perrault ou de Grimm, des constitutions de nos états modernes ou des documents officiels de nos églises? Je concède qu'il n'est pas facile de trouver un terme exact pour désigner cette activité. Je suis d'accord avec Van Seters (et Occam) pour dire: *Redactiones non sunt multiplicandae praeter necessitatem*. Les mots rédacteur ou éditeur peuvent toutefois désigner une activité qui consiste à collationner, retravailler et mettre à jour des traditions anciennes. Le Petit Robert donne cette définition parmi d'autres: le rédacteur est un «professionnel qui assure la rédaction d'un texte». Les dictionnaires anglais que j'ai pu consulter fournissent cette définition pour le verbe *to redact*: «to put (matter) into proper literary form; to work up, arrange, or edit». De toute manière, les mots que nous employons n'ont qu'une valeur analogique et il est évidemment inutile de vouloir comparer, par exemple, le rédacteur d'un texte biblique avec le rédacteur en chef d'un grand quotidien actuel.

En troisième lieu, il me semble difficile d'expliquer certains faits en les attribuant à des auteurs au sens où l'entend Van Seters. Je me contente de quelques exemples repris à la critique textuelle. Comme interpréter les différences entre le texte massorétique (TM) de 1 S 17, le combat de David et Goliath, et celui de la version grecque des Septante (LXX)? Qu'un «scribe» ait ajouté les «plus» dans le texte hébreu ou que le traducteur de la LXX ait sauté ces passages — solution moins probable à notre avis — importe peu ici. Dans les deux cas il faut bien admettre que les scribes ou les traducteurs disposaient d'une liberté qui n'est pas celle de l'éditeur de Van Seters. Les exemples abondent. Ex 35–40, Josué, Jérémie, 1 R 12 sont très différents dans le TM et dans la LXX. Je me contente de renvoyer, parmi de nombreux ouvrages, à A. Schenker, *Älteste Textgeschichte der Königsbücher. Die hebräische Vorlage der ursprünglichen Septuaginta als älteste Textform der Königsbücher* (OBO 199; Göttingen/Fribourg 2004); M.N. van der Meer, *Formation and Reformulation: The Redaction of the Book of Joshua in the Light of the Oldest Textual Witnesses* (SVT 102; Leiden 2004). Des textes comme Jos 20,1-9; Jg 6,7-10; 1 R 6,11-13 manquent soit dans les fragments de Qumrân soit dans la LXX. La construction de l'autel sur le mont Garizim avec les bénédictions et les malédictions qui l'accompagnent se trouve dans le TM en Jos 8,30-35; la LXX place ce texte entre Jos 9,2 et 9,3 (TM). Est-il possible d'expliquer toutes ces différences sans supposer que des scribes aient changé l'ordre des péripécies, supprimé ou ajouté des passages entiers?

Quant à Noth et von Rad, je me contenterai de deux citations qui parlent d'elles-mêmes. La première est de von Rad: «[...] keines der Stadien in dem unendlichen langen Werdegang [des Hexateuchs] ist wirklich überholt; etwas hat sich von jeder Phase erhalten und ist als bleibendes Anliegen bis in die Letztgestalt des Hexateuchs durchgegeben worden» (*Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament I* [TBü 8; München 1958] 85). La seconde est de Noth: «[Der Deuteronomist] hat die Geschichte des Volkes Israel nicht konstruieren, sondern auf Grund des ihm zur Verfügung Materials objektiv darstellen wollen. Darum hat er den überkommenen Überlieferungen gegenüber grundsätzlich zunächst die positive Haltung des ehrlichen Maklers eingenommen [...]» (*Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* [Halle 1943 = Tübingen 1957] 95). À chacun de juger si cet «honnête négociant» de Noth peut être appelé «auteur» au sens propre du terme.

Il va sans dire que la lecture du livre de Van Seters est très profitable. Il est dommage, toutefois, qu'il ait mis son érudition au service d'une thèse qui, malgré toute mon estime et mon amitié pour son auteur, ne m'a pas convaincu.

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Peter DUBOVSKÝ, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*. Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and Its Significance for 2 Kings 18-19 (BibOr 49). Roma, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006. xvii-308 p. 16,5 × 24.

Peter Dubovský's *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* is an intriguing study made up of several parts. First, this book is an in-depth analysis of the Assyrian intelligence system. Second, it is a discussion of the coercive techniques employed by Sennacherib and his cabinet presented in 2 Kings. And third, it is an analysis of how Judahite scholars portrayed the Assyrians in the Hebrew Bible. To accomplish this study Dubovský utilizes a diverse array of sources incorporating the original Hebrew and Assyrian texts with a wide variety of secondary sources from Assyriology, archaeology, Hebrew literature and modern political, strategic and diplomatic studies. Dubovský concludes by arguing not only that the Assyrian intelligence network extended into Judah, but also that a similar information gathering network was also employed by the ancient Judahites. This state of affairs is thought to have heavily influenced the biblical authors. Although *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* addresses interesting and important subject matter, this study is ultimately disappointing. Many of the conclusions offered in chapter 2 are questionable and are later contradicted in chapter 5. The Hebrew textual side of this study may be strong, but the Assyriological side is uneven. Although much of the analysis of the Assyrian intelligence service is intriguing, the textual interpretation is spotty often because it is not aided by the consideration of relevant secondary literature. *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* is nevertheless an interesting study that certainly fills a gap in the current literature on the Assyrian empire.

*Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, which is a revised version of a Th.D. dissertation submitted to Harvard Divinity School in 2005, is made up of six chapters. The first is a nine page introduction that is meant to briefly summarize previous scholarship on the Assyrian intelligence service, outline the plan of the book and discuss the sources. Unfortunately, the introduction is too short to be more than a very quick overview and thus neither lays out the relevant literature thoroughly nor sets up any of the argumentation that appears later in the book.

Chapter two (22 pages), entitled "Neo-Assyrian Intelligence during Sennacherib's Campaign Against Judah", focuses on references to Assyria in 2 Kings. Dubovský's definition and understanding of the phrase "psychological warfare" (discussed more extensively in chapter 4) expands upon the definition originally proposed by Saggs (1963) to include non-violent forms of coercion. Although a more in depth treatment of psychological warfare is certainly welcome, Assyriologists should be aware that Dubovský's use of the term is largely focused on rhetorical devices and literary imagery. The famous and oft-quoted episodes of contact between Sennacherib's officials and Hezekiah's court are the context for a discussion of the various forms of coercive power utilized by the Assyrians in their negotiations with the Judeans. Beginning a pattern that is repeated throughout the book, Dubovský references many studies of modern warfare and diplomacy, but fails to cite or

does not give proper credit to a number of authors who have written on precisely this topic. Surprisingly the work of Dubovský's own committee member, Peter Machinist, especially: "Assyria and Its Image in the First Isaiah", *JAOS* 103 (1983) 719-737; "The *Rab Shakeh* at the Wall of Jerusalem: Israelite Identity in the Face of the Assyrian 'Other'", *Hebrew Studies* 41 (2000) 151-168 and "Mesopotamian Imperialism and Israelite Religion: A Case Study from the Second Isaiah", *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past. Canaan, Ancient Israel and their Neighbors* (eds. W.G. Dever - S. Gitin) (Winona Lake, IN 2003) 237-264, is largely absent from this discussion (note that only Machinist 2000 is referenced in the bibliography). The thrust of the analysis in chapter 2 is on the structure and use of the Hebrew language by the Assyrians in 2 Kings. Although this analysis offers interesting insight into the image of the Assyrians portrayed in 2 Kings and certainly does give us some idea of the diplomatic tactics of the Assyrian officials, the argument of this chapter relies heavily on the premise that the specific language attributed to the Assyrians is an accurate, or at least reasonably accurate, representation of language that was actually used by the Assyrians. Most scholars believe, and Dubovský argues later in chapter 5, that the text we have today in the form of 2 Kings was largely composed and edited by ancient Judahite scholars well after the incidents they describe (compare pages 20-21 with 241; also see 238-239). The implication of this is that the Judahite scholars who later composed and edited the text that found its way into 2 Kings (and Isaiah) would have written the text (or texts) to conform to certain literary norms that are reflective of particular authors rather than their subjects. This deeply undermines the argument laid out in chapter 2 even though a rather contorted discussion attempts to address this problem in chapter 5. Thus the Rab-shaqeh's "detailed knowledge of their religious matters" (21), use of correct terminology and reference to, for example, the rhetoric of exodus and prophetic denunciations are likely not reflective of Assyrian knowledge, but rather Judahite scribal expertise.

In chapter 3 (128 pages) entitled "Case Studies in Neo-Assyrian Military and Political Intelligence", Dubovský takes on the Assyrian textual material to create an interesting and helpful overview of the data contained in the vast corpus of Neo-Assyrian letters pertaining to diplomatic, strategic and intelligence matters. This chapter is arranged geographically beginning in the north, then moving on to the eastern provinces before considering Babylonia, Elam and the western desert. Although much of the material covered is not un-trodden territory, this is certainly a worthwhile chapter and is, in fact, a study that is long overdue. Although at times overly influenced by the recent history of Eastern European politics (cf. 69, for example), this chapter offers an in-depth analysis of how Assyrian intelligence was gathered and processed. Dubovský argues that intelligence information went through a number of steps as it was gathered and passed from local agents to provincial officials and finally to the central administration. Dubovský cites evidence not only for an efficient intelligence gathering system, but also for mechanisms for verifying and synthesizing intelligence information (see especially 58-60, 66-70, 118-122 and 142-143).

In Chapter 4 "Neo-Assyrian Psychological Warfare" (27 pages) Dubovský attempts to reconstruct methods of psychological warfare

employed by the Assyrians first during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III and then during the reign of Sargon II. His analysis largely focuses on Assyria's use of non-violent forms of psychological warfare such as the dissemination of propaganda and the manipulation of information in Babylonia. Interestingly no mention is made of the probably more persuasive violent forms of psychological warfare traditionally attributed to the Assyrians — H.W.F. Saggs, "Assyrian Warfare in the Sargonid Period", *Iraq* 25 (1963) 167-170.

The stated goal of chapter 5 "Contextualization of Hezekiah's Story" (74 pages) is to place the Biblical texts (2 Kings) analyzed in chapter 2 against the backdrop of the discussion of the Assyrian intelligence service discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Dubovský starts with the premise that the information in 2 Kings shows that the Assyrian intelligence network known from the Assyrian letters must have extended into Israel/Palestine, in spite of the fact that there is little or no evidence for this in the Neo-Assyrian corpus. He begins the chapter by providing the (sometimes circumstantial) evidence for this and then goes on to outline both the Assyrian officials and the Assyrian facilities involved in intelligence gathering in Israel/Palestine. Dubovský then turns to the evidence in 2 Kings and concludes that "...the interests of Neo-Assyrian military and political intelligence as reconstructed from 2 Kgs 18–20 match the interests of Neo-Assyrian intelligence as reconstructed from the Neo-Assyrian documents (228)". These suppositions are used to support a reevaluation of 2 Kings. Here Dubovský argues that on a literary level the biblical authors used irony to "demythologize" the Assyria's military and technical superiority (258). On a theological level Dubovský argues that the biblical authors successfully portray the Assyrian intelligence gathering network as flawed since the information it supplied the Assyrians about Judahite religion led Sennacherib to misunderstand Judahite theology. Thus the authors of 2 Kings skillfully compiled a text that reflected events that were known to their intended audience but in doing so they were successful in their effort to portray the Assyrians in such a way as to undermine their military superiority.

A significant drawback of *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* has to do with editing, referencing and organization. We all understand that typographic errors find their way into even the most meticulously edited manuscripts. However, a number of rather large typographical errors including the complete repetition of most of a paragraph and its footnotes (14-15), does have a way of undermining one's confidence in a work. References, or the lack thereof, is also a problem and one wonders if a more thorough updating of the relevant literature in the conversion of this work from a dissertation to a book manuscript would not have both alleviated this problem and helped bolster the author's arguments. The bibliography, for example, contains only one reference past 2003 (and that is a reference to the author's own work), in spite of the fact that the publication date is 2006, and numerous pertinent works are either missing or under referenced. Finally some restructuring would also have added force to Dubovský's work. The main argument of the book (outlined above) comes as a bit of a surprise in the last chapter. Although there are clearly worthwhile sub-arguments along the way, it almost appears that the author is keeping his most provocative theories secret, only

revealing them in the final chapter. It would likely have been more effective if Dubovský had front-loaded his conclusions by outlining them in the rather short and uninformative introduction and/or integrated some of the discussion in chapter 5 with, or in support of, chapter 2.

Overall *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies* is an interesting book. It addresses important subject matter and in doing so throws new light on an important biblical text. In spite of its shortcomings, this book is still valuable to Assyriologists and Biblical scholars alike.

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Klaus SEYBOLD, *Poetik der erzählenden Literatur im Alten Testament* (Poetologische Studien zum Alten Testament 2). Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2006. 331 p. 16 × 24. €39.

Dopo aver scritto, *Poetik der Psalmen* (Poetologische Studien zum Alten Testament 1. Stuttgart 2003), in questo secondo volume Seybold si interessa della poetica della letteratura narrativa dell'AT.

Nella premessa spiega che il termine "poetica" è da intendere in senso ampio, come ricerca dell'arte della narrazione. Enuncia subito tre restrizioni: non presenterà un'analisi critico-letteraria sulla formazione dei testi ma si baserà su quella tradizionale, aggiungendo osservazioni poetologiche; non farà un'esposizione completa ma sceglierà dei brani modello e dalla loro analisi dedurrà le regole della narrativa che poi potranno essere applicate ad altri testi; alla fine non fornirà una sintesi complessiva della ricerca ma delinea l'intenzione teologica dei testi narrativi, e quindi il rapporto tra retorica narrativa e teologia.

Nel cap. 1 Seybold illustra il metodo seguito nell'analisi dei testi narrativi. Parte da una definizione moderna di narrativa e cerca di stabilire quali aspetti di essa siano applicabili alla narrativa ebraica antica. I racconti erano in origine orali, in seguito divennero letterari, redatti sotto l'influsso delle letterature circostanti; infine subirono un continuo lavoro redazionale fino alla redazione masoretica.

Scopo della "poetica" è comprendere la tecnica dell'arte del racconto sulla base di concetti moderni e di dati classici. Non quindi l'organizzazione grammaticale-sintattica, ma l'intenzione dei testi narrativi sulla base delle caratteristiche proprie (vocabolario, forme stilistiche, schemi compositivi, generi e modelli utilizzati) e il modo come un evento reale ("Realereignis") diventò un evento raccontato ("Sprachereignis").

Anche la ricerca precedente si è interessata dell'analisi dei testi narrativi (Seybold cita opere di tipo "Formgeschichte", 16). Si tratta però di studi linguistico-strutturalisti che utilizzano per lo più modelli che mancano di prospettiva storica e sono applicabili solo in parte alla complessa narrativa dell'AT che richiede anzitutto metodi diacronici.

Seybold si inserisce in una nuova fase post-strutturalista sviluppatasi negli ultimi decenni in ambiente anglosassone e israeliano, che illustra la tra-



dizione narrativa dell'AT con i metodi della nuova poetica della narratività. Questa ricerca però, nota l'autore, non tiene conto della "Literarkritik", la quale cerca di fornire un'elaborazione completa dell'unità dei testi e delle opere, il che è premessa indispensabile dell'analisi poetologica.

Seybold spiega il suo metodo sulla base di alcuni testi: Gn 1,1-5; 2 Cr 36,22-23 = Esd 1,1-3 e Is 38,1-3 = 2 Re 20,1-3. Di essi esamina:

- 1) il genere ("Gattung"). Tutti e tre sono racconto ma Gn 1 ("in principio") è mito, storia delle origini, mentre 2 Cr 36 è un resoconto storico di un editto del re Ciro, e Is 38 è una leggenda profetica;
- 2) lo stile del discorso ("Sprachstil"). Nelle narrazioni le forme verbali costituiscono la struttura di base: le forme del perfetto segnano il punto di partenza, le forme consecutive presentano l'evento in tappe successive e lo qualificano. Inoltre c'è da tener conto dei soggetti coinvolti, della differenza di stile tra narrazione dell'evento ("Bericht des Ereignisses") e discorso orale ("wörtlich zitierte Rede") e quindi tra "Rhetorik des Erzählers" e "Rhetorik der sprechenden Personen", e anche dell'aspetto sonoro dei termini ("Lauffiguren", 19);
- 3) le forme compositive ("Baupformen") della narrazione, cioè l'organizzazione in scene, che in Gn 1 avviene mediante i giorni della creazione, in 2 Cr 36 mediante un editto di Ciro, e in Is 38 mediante due incarichi di Dio al profeta verso Ezechia;
- 4) le forme artistiche ("Kunstformen"), per comprendere con quali mezzi il narratore forma e presenta la sua narrazione: cornice, sceneggiatura, livello di stile, dizione, espressioni, assonanze. Ad esempio, in Gn 1 si verifica un processo molto ordinato; in 2 Cr 36 l'editto di Ciro è formulato secondo la fede in YHWH; in Is 38 stanno in primo piano le parole del profeta e del re ma in forma diversa;
- 5) lo scopo ("Zielformen"), o l'intenzione retorica delle narrazioni: Gn 1 è un testo mitologico, protologia; 2 Cr 36 è storia della salvezza di cui l'editto di Ciro è parte; Is 38 è parola profetica che spiega il volere di Dio e invita a conversione.

In conclusione, la ricerca deve partire dai dati delle tradizioni storiche. Oltre le singole narrazioni, occorre considerare le raccolte e i cicli individuate nelle fonti del Pentateuco e dei libri storici. E se l'AT è realmente un libro storico ("Erzähl- oder Geschichtsbuch") — come ritiene G. von Rad (22, n. 10), cosa però contestata, come ha mostrato, sembra, Seybold stesso in uno studio anonimo citato più avanti (20, n. 7), non rintracciabile nella bibliografia in fondo al volume —, è da considerare anche il rapporto della poetologia con la teologia e anche con gli aspetti letterari della raccolta canonica. C'è da precisare poi che la poetica presuppone l'esegesi dei testi e non può sostituirla.

Dato che la narrazione è un mezzo di comunicazione, occorre stabilirne l'intenzione ("Zielsetzung"). Tutti i soggetti che prendono parte alla narrazione sono modificati secondo narrazione stessa; nelle parole di Seybold, "alle Beteiligten sind nach der Erzählung verändert", sia il narratore che l'ascoltatore (22-23).

Poiché le narrazioni bibliche sono in funzione della fede in Dio Signore della storia, la poetica della narrazione non si può limitare a mostrare la bellezza dei testi; deve ricercarne lo scopo e la destinazione, e così si incontra con l'ermeneutica.

Nel cap. 2 della prima parte Seybold cerca di ricostruire la cultura narrativa ebraica ("hebräische Erzählkultur") da cui ebbero origine i racconti biblici.

Abbiamo solo qualche indicazione circa il narrare e la narrazione ebraica. Si suppone che esistesse una tradizione orale, la quale doveva essere molto forte data la quantità di testi narrativi giunti fino a noi, molto più numerosi che in altre culture antiche. Dio stesso è in qualche modo all'origine della cultura narrativa ebraica, in quanto "ha lasciato il ricordo delle sue gesta" (Sal 111,4). Si identifica poi un processo di trasmissione nella tradizione orale, con domande e risposte (cf. "cosa significano queste pietre?", Gs 4,6-7), da cui si sviluppa una serie di "racconti" (con la radice *spr*) legati ai grandi temi del passato, in seguito raccolti e organizzati in cicli di epoche diverse. Nei racconti prevale il "tipico sull'individuale" (26), in quanto si tratta della presentazione di materiale preesistente continuamente rielaborato.

I trasmettitori di questa cultura narrativa sono detti "Padri", il che può indicare sia i Padri antichi del popolo (cf. Sal 78,1-3) come anche i padri delle famiglie in collegamento con i maestri di sapienza.

Come modelli di narrazione ("Erzählmodelle") Seybold passa in rassegna Gdc 7,1-5, in cui compare il termine *mispār* nel senso unico di "racconto"; l'ostrakon di Mesad Hashavyahu (VII sec. a.C), a cui egli paragona 1 Re 3,16, la parabola di Natan (2 Sam 12,1-5) e l'episodio della donna di Tekoa (2 Sam 14); l'apologo di Iotam (Gdc 9), che è un "racconto nel racconto", cioè un episodio raccontato oralmente all'interno di una narrazione; una storia profetica riguardante Eliseo (2 Re 8,1-6); e infine un salmo di ringraziamento (Sal 40).

Come modello delle narrazioni definite "selbstreflexive" Seybold presenta Gn 24, in cui si verifica un racconto nel racconto, e ne deduce che nella società ebraica erano numerose le situazioni in cui si narrava e si ritornava di nuovo sul medesimo racconto in forme nuove, fedeli nel senso ma varie nella forma.

Per farsi un'idea di come avvenisse la raccolta e la messa per scritto dei racconti Seybold utilizza Es 7,14, in cui Dio ordina di scrivere, e Dt 25,17-19, in cui ordina di ricordare. Questo suggerisce che per alcune narrazioni ci fu prima una fase orale, poi quella scritta. Altre narrazioni invece sorsero direttamente in forma letteraria, come la storia di Giuseppe, la storia della successione e le memorie di Neemia.

Per Seybold i "doppioni" non sono segno di fonti diverse, come si ritiene, ma piuttosto di edizioni molteplici in situazioni diverse. Le piccole storie avrebbero un'origine letteraria, piuttosto che orale. Oltre a racconti singoli, sono attestati cicli e raccolte (J, E, JE, P) e la stesura poté avvenire per dettatura o per ricordo. Le storie furono conservate in vari posti: le leggende di un santuario nel santuario interessato; analogamente per le leggende dei re e dei profeti.

Nel seguito del cap. 2 Seybold si interessa dell'edizione dei testi, conservati e copiati, della loro diffusione, ricezione e lettura e infine dell'inventario. La prima parte termina con una lista di circa 150-200 testi narrativi dell'AT classificati secondo il criterio della lunghezza, stabilita in colonne: 1 colonna corrisponde a una pagina della BHS. Secondo il giudizio dell'autore i testi di meno di 1 colonna derivano da trasmissione orale, quelli oltre una colonna sono di origine letteraria (cf. elenco, 41-42).

Il resto del volume sviluppa l'esposizione della prima parte sul metodo di analisi della narrazione: generi letterari (cap. 3), forme stilistiche (cap. 4), forme compositive (cap. 5), forme artistiche (cap. 6), narrazioni letterarie (cap. 7), unità maggiori (cap. 8), opere narrative storiche (cap. 9), narrazioni in versi (Gdc 5, Es 15, Sal 78, ecc., cap. 10), grandi complessi narrativi e varie forme di edizione dei libri canonici (cap. 11), intenzione dei narratori biblici (cap. 12), e infine scopi didattici e "teologia narrativa" (cap. 13).

L'esposizione di conclude con un'appendice che comprende bibliografia, l'abbreviazioni, elenco dei passi biblici e dei concetti (308-331).

Lascio agli esperti di analisi narratologica un giudizio adeguato sulla ricerca di Seybold, che a me appare esageratamente complessa.

Leggendo mi sono sorti dubbi e domande a cui non ho trovato risposta. Ma mi limito ad alcune osservazioni sul campo dell'analisi grammaticale-sintattica. Qui come altrove, Seybold usa un linguaggio per me difficile da capire; ad esempio quando parla di "Kette von Konsekutivformen" e di "Imperfektketten" (19), designazioni che sembrano per lui equivalenti per indicare quello che diversamente si chiama *wayyiqtol*. L'autore afferma poi che "Gen 1 hat ein sehr dichtes Narrativnetz, ganz im Gegensatz zu 2. Chr 36, mit nur einer einzigen Konsekutivform" (19); il che è vero ma si comprende: il primo testo è narrazione, mentre il secondo riporta un decreto e quindi è discorso diretto.

Riguardo poi al "perfetto", o *qatal*, Seybold è convinto che sia un "Hintergrundtempus" (33-34, n. 22, nota ripetuta in 228, n. 26), il che è vero nella narrazione ma non sempre nel discorso diretto. Ad esempio, nel Sal 40,2 *qawwoh qiwwiŋ* è un *x-qatal* di livello principale, continuato da tre *wayyiqtol* coordinati, anch'essi di livello principale (vv. 2b-3a); e, *pace* Seybold, è di livello principale anche *kônen* (v. 3), che è continuato da un altro *wayyiqtol* (v. 4), esattamente come *qiwwiŋ*.

Nella sua attenzione alla ricerca di altri autori (per lo più di lingua tedesca e inglese, ma anche francese, non però spagnola o italiana) Seybold utilizza, almeno in parte, la teoria linguistica di H. Weinrich e l'applicazione all'ebraico che ne ha fatto W. Schneider (70, nn. 16-17), gli stessi autori da cui sono partito anch'io: *Sintassi del verbo ebraico nella prosa biblica classica* (SBF Analecta 23; Jerusalem 1986) ma con risultati molto diversi. Seybold, ad esempio, sostiene, con la maggioranza degli studiosi, che l'imperfetto o *yiqtol* abbia funzione narrativa nella poesia, cosa che non ritengo più valida: "The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in Poetry", *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting. Typological and Historical Perspectives* (eds. S.E. Fassberg - A. Hurvitz) (Jerusalem - Winona Lake, IN 2006) 247-268. Inoltre Gdc 5 (il canto di Debora) non è una "Doppelüberlieferung" di Gdc 4, ma questo è il racconto storico dell'evento mentre il primo è la sua celebrazione orale in versi e canto, e quindi con forme verbali diverse, esattamente come Es 15 canta il passaggio del mare dopo il racconto narrativo dell'evento.

In conclusione la lettura del volume di Seybold potrà risultare esigente e forse controversa. Stimola comunque a considerare alcuni aspetti della narrazione che possono essere utili per un'analisi più varia della narrazione biblica, singole storie e cicli narrativi. Questa analisi però dovrebbe essere basata su una corretta analisi sintattica, dato che solo le forme verbali della narrazione forniscono indicazioni determinanti per stabilire l'inizio e la fine delle singo-

le storie e il modo come esse sono collegate a livello redazionale in cicli più ampi. Cf. il mio contributo "Organizzazione canonica della Bibbia ebraica. Tra sintassi e retorica", *RivB* 43 (1995) 9-29.

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### Novum Testamentum

David R. NIENHUIS, *Not by Paul Alone. The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon*. Waco, Baylor University Press, 2007. xviii-264p. 15,5 × 23,5. \$39.95.

This book is the author's revision of his doctoral thesis submitted at the University of Aberdeen. Nienhuis examines the formation and function of the Catholic Epistles as a distinct sub-canon within the New Testament and explains the strategic placement of the Epistle of James within that sub-canon and the broader canon. In his examination of this topic, he advances the thesis that James is a "canon-conscious pseudepigraph" produced sometime in the mid- or late-second century. He argues that James, instead of being a letter composed in the first century and later added to the Catholic Epistles, was composed to serve as the head letter in this collection of apostolic writings. Building on the work of other scholars, Nienhuis argues that the main impetus for creating this collection of letters was the need to set the Pauline letters within the broader apostolic tradition and thereby correct misappropriations of the Pauline tradition, such as the truncated canon of Marcion. With the composition and inclusion of James, the Catholic Epistles collection contains letters from all three "pillar apostles" of Jerusalem church, James, Peter, and John, in the same order as Paul lists them in Gal 2,9. Nienhuis accepts the judgment of D. Lührmann that the ordering the Catholic Epistles is by design, thus giving James a prominent placement in the New Testament canon as a whole. As a "canon conscious" composition, James seeks to harmonize Paul's thought with the broader apostolic witness represented in the other Catholic Epistles, principally 1 Peter and 1 John.

In the book's Introduction, Nienhuis explains why setting the composition of James in the second century is a thesis deserving serious consideration. He notes that no patristic writer before Origen cites the epistle. Although this does not prove James was written sometime shortly before the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, it is noteworthy that there is no reference or clear allusion to James in Irenaeus and Tertullian, both of whom cite other Catholic Epistles, most notably, 1 Peter and 1 John. The lack of reference to 2 Peter by either patristic writer, both of whom recognize an apostolic tradition which includes but is broader

than Paul, is also noteworthy. Nienhuis views 2 Peter, widely regarded as pseudonymous letter which appears on the scene late, as a writing which betrays a "canon consciousness", a phrase used by D. Meade to describe a characteristic of ancient Jewish and Christian pseudepigraphic writing. As a pseudonymous writing, 2 Peter harmonizes Paul and the Jerusalem apostolate through the voice of Peter. Nienhuis states, "In the case of 2 Peter, there is no gap between historical origin and canonical collection, for canon and composition go hand in hand" (19). He then formulates his argument that the composition of James is similar to that of 2 Peter, namely, it was composed to counter misappropriations of Paul in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

In Chapter 1, Nienhuis examines the formation history of the Catholic Epistles and suggests how the composition of James may have functioned at an early stage in the process. Origen is not only the first patristic writer to cite the Epistle of James; he is also the first writer to cite all seven epistles which comprise the Catholic Epistles. Nienhuis observes that Origen offers no evidence that the seven epistles were recognized as distinct collection of writings within the New Testament. Based on evidence from Eusebius, he proposes that the collection was recognized as canon and the James-Peter-John-Jude order was fixed in the East sometime in latter half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The collection was later recognized in the West, but with variation in the order of the letters and the Petrine letters having priority. Nienhuis proposes that from the earliest stage of the collection to its final form the Catholic Epistles served a "prophetic role vis-à-vis the advent of heresy" (88), that is, the heresy of Marcion and other unorthodox readings of Paul. James is positioned at the head of a collection of letters which represents the answer of the Jerusalem apostolate to a second century heresy. Nienhuis observes that the Eastern tradition tends to link Acts with Catholic Epistles, "as a prelude to the Pauline corpus", thus structuring the canon to "mirror the narrative logic of Acts" (88). Similar to the way Acts harmonies the Jewish mission of Jerusalem church and the Gentile mission of Paul, the Catholic Epistles function alongside the Pauline Epistles to establish points of continuity in the two distinct missions.

In Chapter Two, Nienhuis examines traditions about James from the first and second centuries to determine which traditions best match the implied author of the Epistle of James. The first order of business is to evaluate arguments defending the authenticity of the letter. Since the letter is not referenced until Origen, Nienhuis insists that arguments for the letter's origin during the lifetime of James must explain the lack of early attestation for a letter written by an apostle of James' stature. He regards the various arguments for an early composition date but late surfacing of the letter as plausible but not compelling. Arguments for pseudonymity are more compelling in his view, because it is easier to imagine the author of James is arguing not with Paul but with later interpreters of Paul. He states, "While Paul separated faith from *works of law*, the caricatured person of faith in James is seen to have extended this formula to separate faith from all works ... Such a divergence makes sense when understood according to a temporal matrix wherein the letter of James follows those of Paul at a rather significant distance" (117). In considering a late first-century date for James, Nienhuis finds no clear signs of dependence on James in the writings of Apostolic

Father such as *1 Clement* or *Shepherd of Hermas*. Based on the inconclusiveness of arguments for a late 1<sup>st</sup> century date, Nienhuis proceeds to argue for the letter's second-century origin. He asserts that the issues addressed in the letter and the manner in which they are addressed are more closely related to circumstances of the second century than the first. The most effective defense against second-century distortions of the Pauline message, he asserts, is a "theologically orthodox representation of the earliest mission to Jews" (160). James provides this defense with "its constant appeal to the law, prophets, wisdom literature, and OT exemplars" (158). Presumably such a forceful theological presentation of the Jewish mission—if in fact that is what the author *intends* to present—was not necessary in the first century.

In Chapter Three, Nienhuis explains how the second-century author of James consciously drew upon material from Paul's letters, 1 Peter, and 1 John to create harmony between Pauline and Catholic traditions. The result is a narrowly focused analysis of the letter's intertexture based on the assumption that the author is "intentionally linking his letter with the authoritative apostolic texts of his day" (166). From the standpoint of the *Sitz in Leben* which Nienhuis proposes for James, certain themes common to James and the other letters stand out. Like 1 Peter, James begins by locating the recipients of the letter in the Jewish *diaspora* and exhorts them to be joyful in trials which test the genuineness of their faith (1 Pet 1,1.6-9; Jas 1,1-4). Soon after locating their audiences in the *diaspora*, each letter alluded to or quotes Isaiah 40, evoking the authority of the Hebrew prophet. Nienhuis then identifies a series of parallels between James and Paul on the topic of the law. Although James and Paul have different things to say about the law—James associates the law with "liberty" (1,25) and Paul associates it with "slavery" (Rom 7,6; 8,2)—Nienhuis believes there is a fundamental point of agreement on the topic of the law. The author of James, he argues, has in mind the ethical demands of the Torah when he affirms the law. Paul criticizes not the law as such, but human misappropriation of the law (196). When Paul says the law is "holy and just and good" (Rom 7,12), he too is affirming the moral function of the law. Nienhuis concludes, "Viewed in this way, it makes sense to understand 'the law' in James as a post-Pauline, Catholic reframing of the Torah designed to help readers avoid heterodox interpretations of the Pauline literature" (197). Other common topics which Nienhuis identifies as constituting the scribal intertexture of James include: confidence in prayer (1 John 3,18-22; Jas 1,5-8; 4,1-3; 5,13-20), God and world as incompatible allegiances (1 Pet 2,11-12; Rom 7,23; 1 John 2,15-16; Rom 8,7; 1 Pet 5,5-9; with parallels in Jas 3,13-4,10), and faith-works (assorted passages in Paul's letters, 1 Peter, 1 John, and James).

Nienhuis asserts that the reconciliation of Paul with the Jerusalem apostolate in the Epistle of James involves a "rehabilitation" of both Paul and James. The second-century author of James does in the name of a revered apostle and leader of the Jerusalem church what Irenaeus and Tertullian did, interpreting Paul "through the lens afforded by the Acts of the Apostles", and doing "what Origen did when he used passages from James to enable a more fully Catholic interpretation of Paul's letter to the Romans" (230).

Nienhuis provides a cogent and convincing interpretation of the canonical function of the Epistle of James as the head writing of the Catholic Epistles.

His argument that James was composed in the second century to serve as a bridge between the Pauline corpus and the Catholic Epistles is less convincing. Several objections to his argument may be raised. First, it is not clear that the lack of citations of James before Origen is evidence of its non-existence before the mid- or late-second century. The language of James is largely wisdom discourse spoken by one who has *internalized* the truth being communicated, and the readers or hearers of the letter are presumably to internalize this truth for themselves. Although the discourse has prophetic elements, it is not strongly stamped with the authority of an apostle. It is a type of discourse which may have been widely known and used from the first century onward without association with an apostle. Second, the topics which unite James with Paul's letters and the Catholic Epistles were obviously common topics in the Christian discourse of the first century. It is thus difficult to see how James is more relevant to a second-century context than a first-century context. When oral traditions of early Christianity are considered, we need not assume that the discourse common to James, Paul, and other apostolic traditions was known to authors and audiences only through the circulation of written texts. Any analysis of intertexture which assumes an author is *intentionally* interacting with specific authoritative texts is problematic, especially when prior written texts are not directly cited by the author. Wittgenstein says, "Tell me *how* you are searching and I will tell you *what* you are searching for". Nienhuis conceives of James as a text with a specific *Sitz im Leben* and a corresponding rhetorical function, and then analyzes the intertexture of the text in a manner that confirms his conception of composition. The result is a less than full analysis of the letter's rhetorical structure and the function of its discourse. Third, if the Epistle of James reconciles Paul's teaching and that of the Jerusalem apostolate in a manner similar to Acts, the letter may have served that rhetorical function as early as the period when Acts was composed. That said, it must be emphasized that the original function of James, whenever it was composed, is not much different from its subsequent function in the canon. Here Nienhuis should be commended for challenging historical-critical interpreters not to divorce the meaning of a New Testament text at its point of origin from its meaning in its canonical context.

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Giuseppe PULCINELLI, *La morte di Gesù come espiazione*. La concezione paolina (Studi sulla Bibbia e il suo ambiente 11). Cinsello Balsamo, Edizioni San Paolo 2007. 463 p. 14,5 × 21,5. €32.

In his doctoral dissertation published as a monograph, *La morte di Gesù come espiazione*, Giuseppe Pulcinelli faces a complex and still standing issue concerning the interpretation of Jesus' death, which only in the last thirty years produced dozens of publications in dogmatic theology and biblicistics. The interest in the topic intensified in the 1970's, as the works of Wengst and

Williams appeared, marking a turn from the atoning-vicarious (substitutive) interpretation of Jesus' death toward the Greco-Roman conception of "noble and effective death". In answer, the scholars connected with the school of Tübingen proposed once again the Jewish-biblical tradition, with its cultic concept of expiation as a key to the understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus (Gese, Hofius, Hengel, Janowski, Stuhlmacher).

In what place of contemporary studies should the work of Pulcinelli be located? Judging by its structure and the critical assessment of both the above-mentioned currents, the author tries to find a golden mean and reconcile the biblical-Jewish and Greco-Roman tradition. Ultimately, however, Pulcinelli propels for the leading influence of this last on the Pauline idea of atonement, at the same time restricting the importance of the sacrificial dimension. The author arrives at the conclusion that Paul, in presenting the death of Jesus, draws on the concept of vicarious (non-substitutive) death diffused in the Hellenistic world (see 4 Macc 4; 17), to which some elements of the OT conception of atonement are added, without, however, a direct reference to the cult. The text of Rom 3,25 is crucial, because only there does the explicit vocabulary of cultic atonement appear. Its interpretation in the non-cultic light should also confirm Pulcinelli's hypothesis of the other Pauline texts.

Pulcinelli uses in his inquiries the historico-critical approach, sometimes interwoven with the rhetorical analysis. His work splits into four parts: I. *Introduction*, which treats the methodology and *status questionis* (29-59); II. *The Greek-Hellenistic and biblical-Jewish background* (60-175), in which the vocabulary of atonement and vicarious death is analyzed; III. *The idea of atonement in the NT* (176-262), accompanied by excursus on the formula ὑπέρ (199-215) and on the topic of "reconciliation" (225-227); and IV. *The idea of atonement in Rom 3,25*, with double excursus on the interpretation of "divine justice" (280-302) and construction πίστις Χριστοῦ (295-302), and final *Conclusion* (369-380).

The advantage of the *Introduction* consists of the concise presentation of the theological problem (29-37), as well as of the survey of the contemporary biblical currents interpreting the death of Jesus (48-59). The author discusses here the latest publications on Rom 3,25 (54-59), while in his bibliography he presents an impressive list also containing works of French and Italian scholars (381-423).

Part II, which because of its importance will be examined here at length, starts with the survey of texts exposing the Greco-Hellenistic idea of the vicarious death (60-71). In the author's view, it should demonstrate the popularity of the concept in the Greek world and explain its influence on the NT authors. While the first task succeeds very well, the second poses some questions (68-71). Above all, one should stress the serious differences between the Greek and NT concepts accentuated only superficially by the author: 1. Decisive prevalence of the mythical and legendary texts, 2. The profuse presence of the substitutive vicarious model, and 3. The lacking idea of sin and disparate image of God.

Shifting to the biblical-Jewish background discussed subsequently in part II, the author begins with the linguistic examination of the term ἱλαστήριον appearing in connection with blood in Rom 3,25, and investigates its possible link with Lev 16 and 4 Macc 17 (71-175). The thorough analysis of the Greek



term and its Hebrew counterpart *kappōret* makes a good impression and discloses the rather spatial and symbolic meaning of the noun localizing theophany and (the) oracular event (72-80; 99-101). The author examines also the verb *kipper* and the crucial text of Lev 16, explaining the elements of the rite of atonement understood as a divine gift, a salvation event, which permits a man to reestablish relation with God (81-99). The Greek counterpart *ἱλάσκομαι* in extra-biblical Greek, expresses the idea of "propitiation" and has as its object divinity, while the use of LXX imitates faithfully the sacrificial meaning of Hebrew *kipper* (104-107). Although the author tries to make us aware of some polyvalence inherent in the concept of atonement, the analysis results in clearly showing its sacrificial dimension defined further as a free gift of God.

Pulcinelli deals subsequently with the idea of atonement in extra-biblical Judaism (the apocrypha, Philo, Josephus, Qumran, rabbinic Judaism and Targums) (109-123). What strikes us here is a rather biased vision of Qumran with the ethical-spiritual vision of atonement detached from the cultic meaning (113) (on the contrary, see the Temple Scroll and idea of the community as a new temple). Much more serious objections arise, however, when we pass to the analysis of the crucial text of Isa 53, in which the figure of the Servant is being detached from the semantic field connected with the cult (123-140). The decisive argument is the term *āšām* (Isa 53,10), which is considered non-cultic, stemming from the semantic field of "putting in order" what was destroyed (133-134) (see, however, Lev 4,1-5,7, where it clearly denotes an offering). In the same line, the author claims the influence of Isa 53 on the NT texts, discernible especially in the formulae upon the chalice and of the last supper, where again *only* the idea of vicarious death and pro-existence of Jesus is being stressed (140-158).

Finally, an important background of the NT idea of atonement discussed in part II are the texts of 2 and 4 Maccabees, in front of which Pulcinelli poses the question of to what extent they might influence the Pauline concept (159). Discussing 4 Macc 17,22, where the noun *ἱλαστήριον* appears, the author states that death of martyrs is seen here from the perspective of the prophet or just suffering without reference to the sacrificial atonement (169). According to Pulcinelli, one discovers here the use of the cultic terminology for the description of non-cultic vicarious death (174). The idea itself seems to be quite contradictory, but it is not surprising here. The author prepared it carefully by stressing indiscriminately the popularity of the Greek concept of vicarious death, as well as by metaphorizing or erasing the cultic connotations of the concept in the crucial points of the OT tradition. Thus, the way to the analyses of Pauline material is paved.

In part III, the idea of atonement in Pauline letters is finally treated. The advantage of this part consists in an apt inclusion of the elements belonging to the rhetorical approach and much attention paid to the global meaning of the text. After a brief survey of the idea of atonement in the NT and deuteropauline letters (176-198), the author concentrates on four main texts: 1 Cor 15,3b-5; 2 Cor 5,21; Gal 3,13; and Rom 8,3, characterized by the presence of the formula of the vicarious death (189-262). Using the contextual analysis and x-raying the literary and semantic structures as well as the argumentative

flow, Pulcinelli rightly deduces here the idea of the vicarious (non-substitutive) death. The most noteworthy and valuable are the analyses of the two problematic texts, 2 Cor 5,21 and Gal 3,13, where the author aptly draws the rhetorical disposition and, using the oral models and the figure of metonymy (the effect in the place of cause), explains convincingly the paradox of Jesus made by God "sin" and "curse" "for our sake" (236-237; 248-249). However, we soon get to know that the rhetorical approach is only in addition to the historico-critical axiom, the presence of which infringes heavily the conclusions of this part. Paul in his genuine thought presents a non-cultic, vicarious idea of Jesus' death, since Rom 3,25 and 5,9 (where the sacrificial language appears) belong to the pre-Pauline tradition (186).

Thus, getting to part IV we already know what we should expect from the analysis of Rom 3,25. Beginning with its merits, we find here the properly outlined rhetorical disposition of the unit of Rom 1-4 (268-271; 274-275) and two excellent excursus on the interpretation of the term "divine justice" (280-291) and on the problem of the construction πίστις Χριστοῦ (295-302). The minor fault of the rhetorical outline is inclusion of Rom 5 into the section of Rom 1-4 (cf. J.-N. Aletti, *Israël et la Loi dans la lettre aux Romains* [Paris 1998] 15-32). Once again, however, we discover that the rhetoric is hardly a secondary addition to the core of the historico-critical analysis, in which Rom 3,25 is labeled by the author as pre-Pauline (263; 304-313). Pulcinelli argues for this view on the basis of the presence of *hapax legomena* found in the verse in question (306), which is no proof because most of them are the *hapax* in the entire NT (see similar case in Phil 4,10-20). However, the crucial argument is the presence of the cultic term ἱλαστήριον, which is extraneous, according to the author, to the Pauline theological background (307.365). Paul picks up this term and elaborates it along the lines of 4 Macc 17, suppressing the cultic imagery for the sake of the gift of new life in Jesus accessible through faith to every believer (308-348). The hypothesis, however, is not supported by the argumentative context of Rom 1-3. The author neglects the fact that the cultic ἱλαστήριον perfectly fits the rationale, in which the Apostle ultimately dismantles the Jewish exception pointing at Jesus as the unique way of salvation, the new space of atonement (cf. J.-N. Aletti, "Rm 1,18-3,20: Incohérence ou Cohérence de l'Argumentation Paulinienne?", *Bib* 69 [1988] 47-62). As the former analyses show (336-345), the term does have offering associations both for the Greeks and for the Jews, and, as such, speaks perfectly to both groups.

Unfortunately, the conclusions drawn by Pulcinelli go against even his own linguistic data, aiming more and more to restrict the influence of the sacrificial idea for the sake of the martyrdom and vicarious character of the gift of one's life. Ultimately, according to the author, even the presence of the terms ἱλαστήριον and αἷμα in Rom 3,25 does not allow us to see here the cultic model for the death of Jesus (351-355). Arguments supporting the thesis are rather weak and, besides the one mentioned above, rely on the particular understanding of the figure of metaphor (so called inverted metaphors) which does not make a conceptual bridge between the idea of martyrdom (4 Macc 17) and sacrifice (Lev 16), but rather limits or almost erases this last (356-358). In this light, the position of the author, who does not point either at Lev 16 or 4 Macc 17 as a sure background of Rm 3,25, is

rather strange concerning his predilection for the non-cultic interpretations (355).

In summary, one can disagree with some of the conclusions drawn by Pulcinelli, resulting mostly from his historico-critical approach, but one cannot deny that his monograph is a valuable work. It abounds in the thorough analysis of the vocabulary of atonement, and it also combines interestingly some elements of the rhetorical approach. It is definitely worth reading and discussing, presenting the reader with an updated, comprehensive survey of the problems connected with the interpretation of the death of Jesus.

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## Varia

Stefanie Ulrike GULDE, *Der Tod als Herrscher in Ugarit und Israel* (FAT 22). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2007. xiv-283 p. 15,5 × 23. €54

Winter 2004/2005 this book was accepted as an Old Testament doctoral dissertation by the Catholic Theological Faculty of the Eberhard-Karls University at Tübingen, Germany. Supervisor was Herbert Niehr; Mark Smith (New York) was one of the external advisors, but his critical comments were only partially digested (VII).

The first chapter (1-62) is devoted to an admittedly summary introduction into the concepts of death in the Old Testament and the ancient Near East, followed by a discussion of the figurative language used in connection with death. One values the author's courageous but inevitably rather eclectic attempt to find her way in the jungle of definitions, theories and methods on this hotly discussed topic. She is right in pointing out that the texts of Ugarit have stimulated fresh approaches of the problem of death in the Old Testament, though her review of previous research in this respect (57-62) is far from complete.

In less than 8 pages (71-79) the author attempts to sketch the figure of death in the non-"Syro-Palestinian" cultures surrounding ancient Israel. Obviously this superficial treatment is unsatisfactory because it has been demonstrated that the religions of both Ugarit and Israel were influenced heavily by Mesopotamia and Egypt. It is certainly erroneous to confine the treatment of death in these cultures mainly to the few texts containing an etymologically related name of the god of death Motu. In this way important nether world deities like the Egyptian Osiris, the Mesopotamian Ereshkigal, the Hittite Lelwani, the Hurrian Allani and the Emarite Suwala (= Ugar. *ṯwl*,

O. Aram. Swl, Hebr. שׁוּל), the Greek Hades-Pluton, Persephone and Thanatos, to mention only a few, were bound to remain under-exposed. This is also the reason why her bold statements about the differences between Ugarit and other religions of the ancient Near East with regard to the god of death (119-125) must be taken with a grain of salt.

Evidently the author is better acquainted with the literature of Ugarit which forms the backbone of her comparative study (79-125). Her treatment of the Ugaritic material is competent, but rarely innovative. In many places where scholars are divided over the interpretation of the often difficult Ugaritic text she wisely provides references to various opinions.

Most of her conclusions on the characteristics of the Ugaritic god of death Motu (109-125) will certainly be acceptable to the majority of Ugaritologists. Motu was seen as a legitimate king, be it that his kingdom was rather peculiar as compared to that of other important deities. Whereas the latter reside on high mountains, Death is wallowing in a muddy subterranean pit. His empire is surrounded by infertile desert and is designated by euphemisms masking its dreaded nature. In this light it is understandable that in the Ugaritic texts published thus far, Motu does not receive any sacrifices.

Motu represents the life-threatening aspects of the cosmos: death, disease, infertility, drought, summer heat. He is depicted as a huge monster that devours living beings. Ba'lu is his opposite: god of life, fertility and rain. Their struggle in the Ugaritic myth would have been constructed after the myth about the combat between the weather god and the Sea (Gulde is following Mark Smith here), but it is unlikely that this was a brand-new invention of Ugaritic theologians.

It is impossible to discuss all Gulde's translations and the conclusions she bases on them. Yet a few critical asides are appropriate. Ilmalku was not the chief priest, his master Attanu was (83). Cf. my remarks in A. Laato – J.C. de Moor, *Theodicy in the World of the Bible* (TWB; Leiden 2003) 114-115. Gulde's philologically weak interpretation of KTU 1.5:I. 15-22 (88) misses the gist of Motu's theodicean argument that his appetite for corpses is just as natural as the innate needs of wild animals. The wide space indicating a pause after KTU 1.5:I.25 as well as the adversative particle *p* at the beginning of the next line argue in favour of a contrasting rendering: "— but I was forgotten, o Ba'lu!" (against 88, where the parallel with Ereshkigal is missed). It is inaccurate to designate Ba'lu as a strong warrior without further qualification (91). In the struggle with Yammu it is Kotharu's magic club that brings the decision and in his struggle with Motu it is Shapshu who decides to attribute the victory to Ba'lu, even though Motu appears to be equally strong. Gulde's interpretation of KTU 1.6:II.30-37 is flawed by the fact that she did not notice the parallel with the treatment of Osiris, as discussed in J.C. de Moor, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Nisaba 16; Leiden 1987) 88-89. To this now D. Kurth, "Einige Inschriften auf Särgen des Korn-Osiris", *GM* 166 (1998) 43-52 may be added. As a result she overemphasises the negative aspects of Motu and does not recognise the Ugaritians' acceptance of the inevitability of the "death" of the seed and the resurrection of Death after his scattering by 'Anatu. The admittedly damaged Ugaritic passage according to which Motu did have sons (KTU 1.5:II.20-24), among whom were Resheph

and Qezeb/Qezeb ("the Sting"), is not discussed adequately, which is a pity because of the biblical passages that can be elucidated with its help (Deut 32,23-24, 34; Isa 28,2; Ps 91,5-6; Job 18,13-14; 1 Cor 15,55). The translation of *šdmī* by "das Motu-Feld" (98-99) is a *petitio principii* rather than the result of sound philological work.

Of the Legend of Kirtu only one relevant passage is dealt with (101-102; KTU 1.16:VI.1-2, 13-14), so that the possibility for kings and heroes to escape from the clutches of Death by deification remains undiscussed. Texts, in which the name of Motu has not been preserved, like RS 92.2016, KTU 1.12, 1.20-22 and KTU 1.108, are passed in silence even though they do contain relevant data about the fate of the dead in Motu's kingdom and the possibility for the living to call up the spirits of the dead. An important non-literary text like KTU 2.10 is skipped, even though it is relevant to the interpretation of KTU 1.127:30 and affords us a glimpse into the experience of death among ordinary people (contrast Gulde's statements on p. 122 and cf. TWB, 113-114).

The second part of Gulde's study is devoted to the figure of Death in the Old Testament (126-238). She confines her treatment to the passages in which Death is personified and explicitly described as such (126-128). In some cases, for example Job 18,13-14, her decision to exclude passages on this self-imposed restriction may be questioned. However, her decision to refrain from delving deeply into diachronic problems (128-129) is understandable in this kind of phenomenological comparative investigation.

Closest to the Ugaritic concept of Death as a hungry devourer is Hab 2,5, from the viewpoint of textual criticism a very difficult text in which, however, all exegetes discern a comparison between a greedy wrongdoer and the unsatisfiable Death (Mawet, 129-135). In a long excursus (135-144) a number of similar passages is discussed which, however, have been excluded from the main text because they do not mention Mawet, but, for example, Sheol. However, in other cases the parallel use of Mawet and Sheol (or Abaddon) would be the result of a motif split (145-151). Why? How certain is it that in Ps 55,16 Sheol is "eine reine Ortsbestimmung" (147)? Here it becomes painfully clear that our modern urge to distinguish and classify breaks down on the fuzzy logic of the ancients. Like many others, Gulde sees in Isa 25,8 the reversal of the traditional devourer motif in late apocalyptic theology (151-157).

The conclusion of a thorough discussion of Jer 9,20 is that in this case not Ugaritic, but Mesopotamian and Egyptian traditions have been used in a metaphorical sense (158-181). If this were true, its place in this study would become questionable. Gulde is following Mark Smith in excluding KTU 1.4:VII.35-60 (159, n. 216), but exactly because immediately after the opening of the window in Balu's palace Motu's warriors mount their attack against the god of the life-giving rain, the parallelism between the two texts is closer than Smith and Gulde pretend.

Also in the case of Ps 49,15, discussed with admirable thoroughness (181-215), Gulde concludes that no direct parallel with Ugarit can be established. This might be different if Spronk is right in assuming a certain sarcasm in Ps 49 — K. Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the*

*Ancient Near East* (AOAT 219; Neukirchen 1986) 332. Gulde does accept this possibility with regard to Isa 28,15.18 (215-238, esp. 235) where, however, she does not discuss the parallel KTU 1.82:5 although she comments upon it in the Ugaritic part of her work (102-104).

As indicated above, important aspects of Motu and his kingdom remained underdeveloped in this book. Therefore also its general conclusions should not be taken over uncritically. Nevertheless Gulde's careful analysis of both the Ugaritic and Hebrew evidence is an important contribution to the discussion and deserves to be taken into account in all future studies about this topic.

An impressive bibliography and indices of texts, subjects and words discussed conclude the book. It appeared almost at the same time as Gonke Eberhardt, *JHWH und die Unterwelt: Spuren einer Kompetenzausweitung JHWHs im Alten Testament* (FAT 2. Reihe 23; Tübingen 2007), also a doctoral dissertation defended in 2005. Although it seems somewhat strange that the two were accepted in the same series, they both have their own merits and are complementary to each other in many respects. Gulde was able to consult a preliminary version of Eberhardt's book. Apparently she chose to ignore another important recent monograph on the subject: M. Raharimanantsoa, *Mort et Espérance selon la Bible Hébraïque* (CB.OT 53; Stockholm 2006).

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